

**A picture of pioneer times in California, illustrated with
anecdotes and stories taken from real life. By William
Grey [pseudonym]**

A PICTURE

OF

PIONEER TIMES

IN CALIFORNIA

ILLUSTRATED WITH

ANECDOTES AND STORIES TAKEN

FROM REAL LIFE.

BY WILLIAM GREY.

AUTHOR's EDITION.

SAN FRANCISCO:

PRINTED BY W. M. HINTON & CO., 536 CLAY STREET.

1881.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1881, by

WILLIAM M. HINTON,

In the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.

INTRODUCTION.

This book is respectfully dedicated to the boys and girls born on the Pacific Slope, of pioneer parents.

Its object is to draw a correct and faithful picture of pioneer times in California, and thus expose the misstatements of itinerant lecturers and thoughtless or vicious writers, who seem to delight in wholesale misrepresentation of the habits and character of the first American settlers of this coast. The time has come when this matter should be discussed and set right; for the pioneers are fast passing away, and in a few short years not one will be left to contradict and expose the slanderous charges now constantly put forth against them.

In the picture I have drawn, I have sought to avoid claiming for the pioneers one virtue not fairly theirs; nor have I attempted to conceal their errors. When speaking of individuals, I have tried to avoid undue praise or unjust censure. How far I have succeeded in making my picture a truthful representation, I leave my fellow pioneers to judge.

The destinies of the great young States of the Pacific are fast passing into the hands of the children of the pioneers, and we, the parents, cheerfully resign our trust, feeling sure that the *amor patriæ* with them is most heartfelt, and, burning brightly, will be “the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day” to guide them onward, and ensure a great future to the States of their birth. In resigning our leadership, it ought to be our ambition that our children should honor our memory, and feel proud that they are the children of California and Oregon pioneers.

It is this ambition that has prompted the writing of this volume. It is directly addressed to our young people; but I hope it will be found attractive and interesting to every American citizen, and especially so to all our pioneers, who, day by day, as the shades of evening fall on their path, and their numbers lessen, grow nearer and nearer to each other, and more and more attached to all the

recollections of the days when, as a band of brothers they, with cheerful hearts, faced every danger, side by side, and aroused into life this whole Pacific Coast.

If my fellow pioneers find that I have performed the task I assigned myself but indifferently, I hope they will at least credit a good intention and an earnest endeavor to the author.

WILLIAM GREY

CONTENTS

Chapter I—"The Annals of San Francisco."—Their unpardonable errors—The founding of the Missions—The good they accomplished—Their great wealth—Influence upon the Indians—The traducers of the Mission Fathers—Mr. Dwinelle's address at the centennial celebration of the founding of the Mission Dolores—Miss Skidmore's poem 1 Chapter II—"Reflections of the "Annals."—The future of the American Republic—Our true policy—The London "Times" and the civil war 16 Chapter III—The conquest of California—The absurd account of it given in the "Annals." Exaggerations and misstatements—Stockton, Kearny and Fremont—Stockton's march to Los Angeles—His reception at San Francisco—His alleged project of invading Mexico—Second reduction of California 20 Chapter IV—Conditions which made the conquest of California an easy one—The murder of Foster—The tell-tale revolver—The vaquero's story—Capture of Mariana—His examination—Subsequent escape—Mr. Breen's story—The old woman and the dying man—Mr. Breen and the man—The Mexican's confession—The murder of his affianced and an American—Death of the Cary brothers—The Mexican's murder of his own friend—His remorse—Father Anzer's visits—The burial—Other murders 31 Chapter V—Discovery of gold by Marshall—Unsuccessful endeavor to keep the matter secret—Life in California—Incorrect account of it in the "Annals."—Alleged dissipation of all classes—General indulgence in gambling—Amusements, etc 48 Chapter VI—The nature of our early immigration—Difficulties and expense—The writer's own experiences—The South Carolina—Character of the voyagers, and their amusements—The only lady passenger—Rio—Three scalawags and their fates—The Emperor's garden—Puzzling money—Slave trade and civil rights—Isaac Friedlander, Conroy and o'Connor—John A. McGlynn, W.

T. Shaw, D. J. Oliver, Wm. F. White—Air castles—Dead and living 67 Chapter VII—Island of Juan Fernandez—Escape of the convicts—Entering the Golden Gate—Unwillingness of captains to command California bound ships—Preparations to check mutiny—Mutinies on two ships, and their justification 79 Chapter VIII—First impressions of San Francisco—Its hurry of business—Meeting old faces—\$7,000 gain on an investment of nothing—A lesson from “Tony”—First brick building—John A. McGlynn and one of San Francisco's two wagons—The monthly mail—Curious government accounts—Mr. McGlynn at the great fire 84 Chapter IX—The three classes of citizens—The gentlemen politicians—The cause of the Vigilance Committees—The typical miner—Welcome arrivals—Ingenious furniture. Early law courts 95 Chapter X—Bill Liddle—A dangerous pass in the mountains—Old Kate's intelligence—The meeting in the pass—Valor of old Kate—The discomfited conductor—The trial, and the Alcalde's decision—Comparison between the old and new methods of settling disputes—Life of a politician—A Cabinet Minister's advice to a young applicant for a position 115

vi

Chapter XI—Strange recognitions—Stolen money returned—Monterey—Hospitality of its inhabitants—Its decay—A fandango—Don David Spense and Don Juan Cooper. Meeting of old friends—Talbot H. Green—His generosity—Refusal of nominations for United States Senator and Mayor—His marriage—Recognition by a lady—The Democratic Convention—Green's identification as an absconder—Denial of the charge—His departure from San Francisco—Subsequent career 122 Chapter XII—Wages and merchandise—A slow English firm—A customer for bowie knives. A shrewd speculation in sheetings 132 Chapter XIII—John W. Geary—History of his advancements—As Alcalde and as Mayor 139 Chapter XIV—The Society of California Pioneers—Their indorsement of the “Annals.” “Woman's rights”—True sphere of a woman—Resources of California—Newspapers, banks and manufactories—The judiciary—The railroads and the new constitution—Californians who have won laurels in the East—Loss of the Central America—Rescue of the women and children by the brig Marine—Terrible partings—Cowardice of two men—Others saved—General Sherman's account—A passenger's story 162 Chapter XV—Fascination of pioneer times—Anecdotes and stories in illustration 173 Chapter XVI—A California

miser—A speculation in hogs—A marriage of a bashful woman. A life saved by New York law—A lawyer's first appearance in court—A good speech reserved—Squatters dispersed by refusing to talk—A case won by using an Irish authority—A “divide” with robbers and lawyers—Dan Murphy loses his cash 179 ELLEN HARVEY; OR, THE WIFE'S DISAPPOINTMENT. Chapter I—On board of the steamer II—A pleasant lunch party—Restrospect 219 III—The proposal of marriage 230 IV—Departure for California 236 V—Sickness—Susan Marsh, the nurse 241 VI—Mrs. Gabit—The wife's anguish 248 VII—Ellen and the Rev. Father 262 VIII—Frank's letter to his wife 273 IX—The wife's letter to her husband 282 X—Susan Marsh's subsequent history—Conclusion 287 ADA ALLEN; OR, THE HUSBAND'S SURPRISE. Chapter I—Arrival in San Francisco—Captain Casserly 293 II—Edmund Allen—A beautiful girl 301 III—A troublesome column of figures 307 IV—The poor widow—Mr. Morehouse and Edmund 312 V—The song—The proposal of marriage 320 VI—News from California—A terrible dream 325 VII—Minnie Wagner—Brother and sister 329

vii

VIII—The girl's errand—Ada and Minnie 337 IX—Desire to go to California—Departure 343 X—First letter from Edmund—Mrs. Bucket 348 XI—Mr. and Mrs. Morehouse and Mrs. Bucket 357 XII—The welcome letter from Edmund 365 XIII—The wife's anxiety—Departure 369 XIV—San Francisco—The pretty little cottage 383 XV—From the theater—The joyful meeting 387 XVI—Waiting for letters—Mrs. Bucket again 393 XVII—A housekeeper's difficulties—Conclusion 396 MINNIE WAGNER; OR, THE FORGED NOTE. Chapter I—A happy breakfast—Arrival in California 401 II—Sir John Cameron—Agnes and Lusk 409 III—A selfish child—Father and daughter 417 IV—The robbers trapped—Young Lusk 422 V—Escape—Capture of a Chilean vessel—The fight 430 VI—News from Walter—Mrs. Lighthouse 439 VII—Minnie's plan to meet her brother 458 VIII—Rich gold diggings—John Ward 463 IX—Discovery—Wild and Jim Becket—In danger 481 X—Pursuit—The villains foiled—New friends 497 XI—The drunken messenger—The forged note 509 XII—Waiting—Attempted abduction—The villains' fate 516 XIII—A visit from Captain Ward—Somber thoughts 533 XIV—James De Forest and Minnie—The Colonel's cattle 539 XV—Preparing for sea—Captain Ward and Brown 545 XVI—Confession of love—Captain

Ward's arrival 551 XVII—Attempted assassination—A consultation 559 XVIII—The robbery—Minnie's encouragement 566 XIX—More trouble for Walter—Minnie's request 580 XX—Arrival of James De Forest—Minnie's generosity 588 XXI—A note from Captain Ward—"A boat ahoy!" 599 XXII—A visit to Father Maginnis—Captain Ward's proposal 605 XXIII—Walter and Ward—Caught in a trap 613 XXIV—Miss Scott and Lizzie—The struggle 626 XXV—Anxiety for Walter and Minnie—On the track 639 XXVI—The prisoners—Captain Ward's horrid fate 644 XXVII—At sea in an open boat—Rescued by De Forest 657 XXVIII—Happy events—Conclusion 672

CHAPTER I.

"THE ANNALS OF SAN FRANCISCO"—THEIR UNPARDONABLE ERRORS—THE FOUNDING OF THE MISSIONS—THE GOOD THEY ACCOMPLISHED—THEIR GREAT WEALTH—INFLUENCE UPON THE INDIANS—THE TRADUCERS OF THE MISSION FATHERS—MR. DWINELLE'S ADDRESS AT THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE FOUNDING OF THE MISSION DOLORES—MISS SKIDMORE'S POEM.

In the year 1854, when the duration of the American rule in California was yet but little over five years, three well known citizens, then residing in San Francisco, wrote and published a book entitled "The Annals of San Francisco," and dedicated it to the "Society of California Pioneers." This book was neither more nor less than a caricature of the manners and habits of the early American settlers of this coast. We all knew of its grave misrepresentations, and looked upon it with contempt, not only for that, but because it was plainly got up to puff individuals mostly unworthy, and because it was written in a style of bold, immoral bravado, that was disgusting to all true Californians. Notwithstanding this, it was for a time widely circulated, and read almost without adverse comment, for in the rush and excitement of those days no one had time to attack it and expose its true character. It had its run; and, as is the case with all such books, it soon dropped out of sight. Its publication and its fate, however, prevented any attempt by others to write a more faithful history of the times; so that to-day it remains the only book claiming to be a regular, authentic history of the pioneer times in California.

As I have said, it was dedicated to the Society of California Pioneers, and they never repudiated the dedication. The book, therefore, went forth with their indorsement. This gave it a standing it never could have had otherwise. As the Society of California Pioneers is of the very first respectability, each individual member is supposed to be a competent witness to the truth of its assertions. This criminal neglect by the society, in not repudiating the dedication, was most serious in its consequences; for, although the book is very seldom met with in private libraries, we find it constantly quoted by lecturers and writers on California, as first class authority.

In this volume I do not pretend to give a regular history of pioneer times in California; but simply a *picture* of them, intending to show the true character of the emigrants who flocked to this State on the discovery of gold in 1848, and later. This picture of mine will be found so entirely different from any that could be drawn from the “Annals,” that, to satisfy my readers that I do not condemn that book unjustly, it is necessary for me to give some parts of it in a short review.

In many instances the “Annals” give the facts of history correctly, but the trouble is the authors are not satisfied to let the facts speak for themselves, when the impression given is opposed to their views and prejudices. No; in such cases they do all they can to make “truth seem a lie,” or vice versa, as may be agreeable to them.

For instance, let us take the history of the early Missions in California, just as it is recorded in the “Annals,” without the comments, sneers and “reflections” of the authors themselves, and what do we find? We find that, a little over one hundred years ago, in 1776, this beautiful State of ours lay almost asleep here on the Pacific slope, inhabited only by about seventy-five thousand Indians. According to the “Annals,” we find those Indians to be of the most degraded caste, making a precarious and miserable livelihood by hunting, fishing and collecting the acorns that are found on a sort of scrub oak in the mountain districts. They were naked and houseless. Then we find coming on the scene the Missionary Fathers, at first four in number, and according to the “Annals” men of wonderful energy, of surprising judgment, pious and virtuous—“pure in their lives, and faithful to their calling,” they tell us. They had nothing of self to work for. Their lives were simple as frugality could make 3 them. They had no wives and children to be aggrandized and made rich.

They had no string of poor relations hanging around them to be cared for. No; according to the facts given us in the “Annals,” they had nothing to urge them on but the purest benevolence and their anxiety to bring those benighted, poor, miserable human beings to the knowledge of the true and only God, and at the same time to relieve their physical wants by clothing the naked and feeding the hungry. According to the “Annals,” the Missionaries succeeded in converting more than twenty-five thousand of these people to the knowledge of God and the Christian religion; and then we find these Indians clothed, fed, housed, and happy. We find them industrious and hard working, as the monuments left attest. We find, by the testimony of the “Annals,” that the government under which the Missionary Fathers had brought them was of a kind, parental character. The same authority tells us that “towards the converts and actually domesticated servants the Fathers always showed such an affectionate kindness as a father pays to the youngest and most helpless of his family.” Then, from the “Annals” we learn, that the labors of the Missionaries were crowned with success to the fullest, changing this idle, vagabond people into an industrious, productive farming community, as the following statement of live stock raised by the Missionaries in 1825, and of the farming produce of the harvest of 1831, will attest:

In 1825 the Mission Dolores, of this city, had 76,000 head of cattle, 950 tame horses, —breeding mares, 84 stud of choice breed, 820 mules, 79,000 sheep, 2,000 hogs, 456 yoke of working oxen, 18,000 bushels of grain, \$35,000 worth of merchandise, and \$25,000 in specie.

In 1823 Santa Clara branded 29,400 calves as the year's increase, and owned 74,280 head of full-grown cattle, 407 yoke of working oxen, 82,540 sheep, 1,890 trained horses, 4,235 mares, 725 mules, 1,000 hogs, and \$120,000 in goods.

San Jose had, in 1825, 3,000 Indians, 62,000 head of cattle, 840 tame horses, 1,500 mares, 420 mules, 310 yoke of oxen, and 62,000 sheep.

San Juan Batista, in 1820, owned 43,870 head of cattle, 1,360 tame horses, 4,879 mares, colts and fillies, 69,530 sheep, 321 yoke of working oxen, \$75,000 in goods, and \$20,000 in specie.

In 1825, San Carlos branded 2,300 calves, and had 87,600 head of cattle, 1,800 horses and mares, 365 yoke of oxen, 5,400 sheep, much merchandise, and \$40,000 in specie.

Santa Cruz, in 1830, had 48,200 head of cattle, 3,200 horses and mares, 72,500 sheep, 200 mules, large herds of swine, and \$25,000 worth of silver plate.

4

Soledad, in 1826, owned 36,000 head of cattle, 300 yoke of oxen, 70,000 sheep, and more horses and mares than any other Mission. So rapidly did its horses increase that they were given away in order to preserve the pastures for cattle and sheep.

In 1822, San Antonio owned 52,800 head of cattle, 1,800 tame horses, 3,000 mares, 500 yoke of working oxen, 600 mules, 48,000 sheep, and 1,000 swine

San Miguel, in 1821, owned 91,000 head of cattle, 1,100 tame horses, 3,000 mares, 2,000 mules, 170 yoke of working oxen, and 47,000 sheep.

San Fernando, in 1826, owned 56,000 head of cattle, 1,500 horses and mares, 200 mules, 400 yoke of working oxen, 64,000 sheep, 2,000 swine, \$50,000 in merchandise, and \$90,000 in specie. Its vineyards yielded 4,000 gallons of wine and brandy per annum.

In 1829, San Gabriel had 70,000 head of cattle, 1,200 horses, 3,000 mares, 400 mules, 120 yoke of working oxen, and 54,000 sheep. Its annual income from wine was \$12,000.

In 1826, San Luis Rey had 70,000 head of cattle, 2,000 horses, 140 yoke of tame oxen, and 68,000 sheep.

At one time San Luis Obispo had 80,000 head of grown cattle, 2,000 tame horses, 3,500 mares, 3,700 mules, and 72,000 sheep.

La Purissima, in 1830, had over 40,000 head of cattle, 300 yoke of working oxen, 2,600 tame horses, 4,000 mares, 30,000 sheep, and 5,000 swine.

Santa Inez, in 1820, owned \$800,000 worth of property.

Santa Barbara, in 1828, had 40,000 head of cattle, 1,000 horses, 2,000 mares, 80 yoke of oxen, 600 mules, and 20,000 sheep.

San Buenaventura, in 1825, owned 37,000 head of cattle, 600 riding horses, 1,300 mares, 200 yoke of working oxen, 500 mules, 30,000 sheep, 200 goats, 2,000 swine, orchards, vineyards, \$35,000 in foreign goods, \$27,000 in specie, with church ornaments and clothing valued at \$61,000.

The harvest of 1831 was:

Bushels of wheat 62,860

Bushels of corn 27,315

Bushels of beans and peas 6,817

In what an absurd light this showing puts the sneers of the authors of the “Annals!” Supposing these Indians to be of our own race and intelligence, could they have done much better, considering their numbers and the primitive sort of farming tools in their possession, and the total absence of farming machinery?

There is not one material fact cited in the whole account by the “Annals” affecting the character of the Missionary Fathers. The picture of contentment, happiness and physical comfort this people present to our view is most charming, so much so that even the authors of the “Annals” themselves cannot help exclaiming: “The great beauty and peacefulness of such a life must be a delightful subject of contemplation to the wearied spirits who labored through the turmoils, anxieties and vexations of the great world.” These Missions flourished in all their splendor for about seventy-five years, and for that long period more than thirty thousand human beings were well fed, well

clothed and well housed. They were taught to be industrious and useful workers, while their leisure hours were made happy by the inauguration of innocent amusements. Not only the authors of the “Annals,” but every writer of credit who has treated of these Missions, agrees in saying that the Indians, while under the control of the Missionary Fathers, were virtuous, industrious, good and happy. “A tree is known by its fruit,” and one would suppose that the “Annals” would have been content to give the facts of history in regard to the Missions, and let their readers form their own conclusions. They, however, do nothing of that sort; they interlard the whole account with sneering comments and absurd “reflections,” that do them no credit if they pretend to be believers in Christianity. They go to the expense of having wood-cuts prepared for their book, intended to bring ridicule on the Missionary Fathers. They assert that the Indians were only seemingly converted, and that, after their seeming conversion, they were nothing but “lazy, fat, over-fed beasts,” worse than when they were naked, hungry and houseless, under the control of sorcerers in religion. Then, with a self-complacency that is refreshing, they say: “California and humanity owe nothing to the Missionary Fathers. Away with them!” You, my young readers, who are natives of this California of ours, will, I trust, feel it a duty to examine this subject for yourselves, and see how far the “Annals” are justified in the judgment the authors pronounce with such apparent satisfaction to themselves. When you do so, I think you will find every fact of history in relation to these Missions a condemnation of the flippant judgment they give, even if you search no further than their own book. If it were otherwise, how could it have been possible for the Missionary Fathers to accomplish the wonders they tell us of? If the Indians, when fed, clothed and housed, were not immensely improved, morally, intellectually and physically, could they have made the showing recorded in the “Annals” in stock-raising and general farming? If men do not believe in religion of any sort of course they will, as the authors of the “Annals” do in this case, ridicule as absurd the attempts that religious men are constantly making all the world over to bring heathens to the knowledge of God and His religion. If this is the position of our authors, we can understand them, so far as religion goes; but they should explain to us how it is that humanity owes nothing to those who, as they tell us, rescued thousands, and tens of thousands, of poor human beings from nakedness, hunger and cold, and changed them into a happy, well-fed, prosperous people. They tell us the Missionaries were virtuous, good, and faithful to their calling. Why is it that that calling was

not a noble one which they so faithfully followed for over seventy-five years? Why is it that if the authors of the “Annals” had saved ten human beings from cold and starvation, be their skins white, black or red, they would expect their praises to be sung throughout the land? And so they surely would be. Yet, the mighty work of the Missionaries “deserves nothing from humanity!” Why is it that the name of Florence Nightingale is a household word with the English-speaking people all the world over? Yet, what comparison is there in what she did to earn her well-deserved renown to the life-long charity of the Missionary Fathers in California? Yet the “Annals” tell us they “deserve nothing from humanity.” It is to be regretted that such a man as Doctor Stillman should also yield to early-imbibed prejudices so far as to chime in with these authors of the “Annals” in an onslaught on the California Missions, as he does in his very entertaining book entitled, “Seeking the Golden Fleece.” His statements to the disadvantage of the Missionaries are supported by quotations from the reports of some early navigators on this coast—one a Frenchman, another a Russian, and two more, Englishmen. Every one of these men was the bitterest natural enemy of Spain, and anxious that their own respective nations should get possession of this beautiful country. Some of them were badly treated here, and were generally only permitted to remain a few days in the country. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the reports they gave of all they saw in California should be most unfavorable to the Spanish authorities, and especially to the Missionaries. But why go back so far to get testimony for or against the Missionaries of California, when we have it here at home, where its truth can be tested? Why did not the Doctor go to Santa Clara, or any of the other principal old Missions, and interview old men, who are there to be found even now, who lived at those Missions at the very time some of the Doctor's witnesses are said to have visited this coast, and ascertained from those *living witnesses* the truth as to the conduct of those Missions when under the rule of the Missionaries? When we came here, in '49, there were Americans, Englishmen and Scotchmen living here who had been on this coast from ten to twenty years before our time, and of course while the Missions were in the hight of their power, yet not a word had any of them to say that would corroborate Doctor Stillman's representations. The Doctor's statement, in brief, is about this: That the Missionaries were “cruel” and “brutally tyrannical” in their government of the Indians. That they sunk the Indians to a lower state of “nastiness and filth” and “general degradation” than they found this people in when they came among them. Then the

Doctor concludes by telling us, in sober earnestness, that “The three great divisions of Christendom, Catholic, Greek Catholic and Protestant, give a fearful array of evidence” to prove that all this is so. One division he makes out to be the Frenchman, as he supposes him to be a Catholic. The second division of Christendom he calls the Russian, as he takes him to be a Greek Catholic. The third division is his English witness, as he supposes him to be a Protestant. If the Doctor is right in holding that Christendom or Christianity was embodied in these three men, the evidence they give is undoubtedly very important; but if the plain truth were known, I think there are nine chances to one that not one of these sailors cared a fig about religion of any sort. They were all men of the world, attached to their own nationalities and against all others, with the strong prejudices of those times. They undoubtedly agreed on one point, and that was, that all done by Spain was badly done, and must be represented to the home government in the worst possible light.

Dr. Stillman's attack on the Missions is more wholesale than that of the “Annals,” because the “Annals” give the facts of history, and those facts contradict their own assertions. The Doctor tries to avoid this, and does avoid it, except in one instance. On page 304 of his book he quotes from his great Catholic witness, La Yseronse, who says, “*There was no attempt made to teach them [the natives] the most common arts. Their grain was ground by women in the primitive Indian method.*”⁸ On page 315 the Doctor gets his Greek Catholic witness to tell us that when the Missionary rule ceased, “Not a solitary memorial of benefit conferred remained. No mill, not even a blacksmith, and the commonest wants of civilized life were not supplied to mitigate the rigorous despotism.” Then, on page 320, in speaking of this same period, the Doctor calls up an English witness, who says: “They [the Indians] had been taught *in many of the arts, and there were, in almost every division, weavers, tanners, shoemakers, blacksmiths, carpenters, bricklayers and other artificers.*”

What now becomes of the Doctor's great Catholic witness, as quoted from page 304? It surely cannot be that one whole division of Christendom lied. This quotation from page 320 also puts the Greek Catholic division of Christendom in a very questionable light—in fact, it looks to me as if it let both these divisions out, as witnesses worthy of credit, particularly as we all, here in California, know, of our own knowledge, that the quotation from page 320 is true, and the other untrue.

But what is the use of further notice of such misrepresentations of the Missions as these of Dr. Stillman, who bases his accusations on such testimony as that of long since dead sailors who visited this coast only for a few days, and who were filled with national prejudices against the Missionaries and the nation to which they belonged, while he ignores or refuses, or neglects to hear, the testimony of witnesses, many of whom have not yet passed away from among us, and who flatly contradict the representations of those roving sea captains of long ago.

We cannot help feeling pity for men who allowed themselves to be so governed by their prejudices as to make them seek to rob the glorious dead of the good name they so fairly and justly won. We should all be sure to have an authentic history of those wonderful Missions in our family library, and when our heart sickens, as it sometimes must, at the daily exhibitions all around us of selfish, cunning, plotting, hypocritical men, each trying to outreach and get the advantage of the other, crushing out, in their mad struggle with each other, all the teachings of Christianity, and all the natural benevolence of the human heart. When every one, as he rushes by in his frantic pursuit of selfish, worldly joys, cries fool to him who is yet humane and unselfish, and who seeks, in the light of the teachings of the Cross, to share all with all. Yes, when our faith is shaken by this disgusting aspect of our humanity, which makes the beasts of the field seem superior to us, let us take from the shelf that book and read the story of the Missions of California, and it will restore firmness to our faith and admiration and respect for our humanity. For there we will find men of education and of the highest order of ability, resigning home, friends and every prospect of worldly comfort, dedicating their whole lives, without any reserve for self, to a struggle in a foreign land, to rescue a nation of miserable, degraded savages from hunger, nakedness and the lowest depths of superstition. As the worldly-proud white man reads the first line of the story of the Missions, which announces the landing in California in 1776 of these Missionaries, he is surprised how sane men could undertake such a task with any hope of success, and exclaims, perhaps, “You will not succeed; and if you do, what are those red savages to us?” The Missionary answers, “In them I see brothers, human beings like ourselves, every one as dear to God as a prince on his throne.” In such faith—a faith that knows no doubting—the Missionary works, strives and toils; and, as we behold their wondrous success, our astonishment and admiration are mingled with pride

and gratitude to God that He has endowed our humanity with such heroism in charity; and its contemplation inspires us with a desire to do our part in efforts to drive back and stay the flood of selfish teaching that threatens to stifle every noble aspiration of our humanity. As we lay the book down—no matter what our peculiar views in religion may be—we feel that the virtues and triumphs won by the Missionary Fathers of California belong alike to Christian civilization, and that their memories should be guarded by all from misrepresentation. It may not be out of place here to quote a few passages from the late Hon. John W. Dwinelle's address, delivered on the occasion of the Centennial Celebration of the founding of the Mission church in San Francisco. It will show how such men as Mr. Dwinelle sympathized with the authors of the “Annals” and Dr. Stillman, in their foolish attempts to belittle the work of the Missionaries:

“The immediate results of the Mission scheme of christianization and colonization were such as to justify the plans of the wise statesmen who devised it, and to gladden the hearts of the pious men who devoted their lives to its execution. At the end of sixty-five years (in 1834), the Missionaries of Upper California found themselves in the possession of twenty-one prosperous Missions, planted upon a line of about seven hundred miles, running from San Diego north to the latitude of Sonoma. More than 10 thirty thousand Indian converts were lodged in the Mission buildings, receiving religious culture, assisting at divine worship, and cheerfully performing their easy tasks. Over seven hundred thousand cattle, of various species, pastured upon the plains, as well as sixty thousand horses. One hundred and twenty thousand bushels of wheat were raised annually, which, with maize, beans, peas, and the like, made up an annual crop of one hundred and eighty thousand bushels; while, according to the climate, the different Missions rivaled each other in the production of wine, brandy, soap, leather, hides, wool, oil, cotton, hemp, linen, tobacco, salt and soda. Of two hundred thousand horned cattle annually slaughtered, the Missions furnished about one-half, whose hides, hoofs, horns and tallow were sold at a net result of about ten dollars each, making a million dollars from that source alone; while the other articles, of which no definite statistics can be obtained, doubtless reached an equal value—making a total production of the Missions themselves of two million dollars. Gardens, vineyards and orchards surrounded all the Missions, except the three northernmost—Dolores, San Rafael and Solano, the climate of the first being too inhospitable

for that purpose; and the two latter, born near the advent of the Mexican Revolution, being stifled in their infancy. The other Missions, according to their latitude, were ornamented and enriched with plantations of palm trees, bananas, oranges, olives and figs, with orchards of European fruits, and with vast and fertile vineyards, whose products were equally valuable for sale and exchange, and for the diet and comfort of the inhabitants of the Missions. Aside from these valuable properties and from the Mission buildings, the live stock of the Missions, valued at their current rates, amounted to three millions of dollars of the most active capital, bringing enormous annual returns upon its aggregate value, and, owing to the great fertility of animals in California, more than repairing its annual waste by slaughter.*****

“It was something, surely, that over thirty thousand wild, barbarous and naked Indians had been brought in from their savage haunts; persuaded to wear clothes; accustomed to a regular life; living in Christian matrimony; inured to such light labor as they could endure; taught a civilized language; instructed in music; accustomed to the service of the Church; partaking of its sacraments, and indoctrinated in the Christian religion. And this system had become self-sustaining, under the mildest and gentlest of tutelage; for the Franciscan monks, who superintended these establishments, most of whom were from Spain, and many of whom were highly cultivated men—statesmen, diplomatists, soldiers, engineers, artists, lawyers, merchants and physicians before they became Franciscans—always treated the neophyte Indians with the most paternal kindness, and did not scorn to labor with them in the field, the brickyard, the forge and the mill. When we view the vast constructions of the Mission buildings, including the churches, the refectories, the dormitories, the workshops, the granaries, and the rancherias—sometimes constructed with huge timbers brought many miles on the shoulders of the Indians—and look at the massive constructions at Santa Barbara, and the beautiful sculptures and ribbed stone arches of the church of the 11 Carmelo, we cannot deny that the Franciscan Missionary monks had the wisdom, sagacity, absolute self-denial, self-sacrifice and patience to bring their neophyte pupils forward on the road from barbarism to civilization, and that these Indians were not destitute of taste and capacity. It is enough that the Franciscan monks succeeded in all they undertook to accomplish. It matters not that the Spanish theory of the available capacity of the Americo-Indian races for final self-government

and independent citizenship was a false one; after having shown that these people could be christianized and civilized by the attraction of kindness and the imposition of systematic, regular and easy tasks while in a state of pupilage, the destruction of the Missions of California seems to have demonstrated the converse proposition that these are the only conditions of the proximate christianization of these races.*****

“But although the Missions, as such, were destroyed, although the Mission system thus disappeared and the body of the neophytes was absorbed in one general cataclysm of drunkenness, mendacity and disease, still some results remained, which were worth all that they cost. Taking the number of 30,000 Indians, who resided in the Missions at the height of their prosperity, and estimating the life of the average Indian as a short one, as it undoubtedly was, I calculate that during the sixty-five years of the prosperity of the Missions no less than 60,000 christianized Indians were buried in her *campos santos* —her consecrated cemeteries. I estimate that during the last hundred years no less than 20,000 whites—native and foreign—were buried, as baptised Catholics, in the same holy soil. I know that during all this period, the Mission Churches filled the office of Secular Churches to the native and foreign populations; and that when people came into California as emigrants, from England, Scotland and the United States, they almost always were baptised into the Catholic Church. So that when the Mission system reached its period by limitation, and the United States succeeded to the political dominion of Spain and Mexico, something still remained, which had not died, and which can never die. It was a series of Catholic churches, extending from San Diego to Sonoma, with the altars, the vestments and the paraphernalia of worship. It was the solemn Registers of Births, Marriages and Burials, extending backward for a hundred years, and invoking the mysterious solemnity of religion upon those acts upon which repose domestic happiness and the security of property. This was the position which the Church occupied in California; a position which she did not choose, which she did not contend for—which came to her by inheritance.*****

“I have not, on this occasion, uttered a word in praise of the Catholic Church. If I had been one of her sons, I should have given her such a tribute, as full of gratitude as of truth. But, as it is, this might seem like adulation, and she does not need to be patronized by me.”

During the last fifteen years of the existence of the Missions, the Mexican population of California was considerably increased, and had become very influential with the home government. 12 Prominent citizens among them entered into active intrigues to overthrow the Missionary system, seeing in its destruction fortune and power sure to fall into their own hands. Of this class Mr. Dwinelle says:

“This new class of adventurers, characterized by the exuberance of their noses, their addiction to the social game called monté, and the utter fearlessness with which they encountered the monster aguadiente, were both constant and consistent in their denunciations of the monks who had charge of the Missions. They were accused of being avaricious, these poor monks who had taken the vow of perpetual poverty. They were said to be indolent; they who roused themselves at the morning Angelus, Summer and Winter, and to whom the evening Angelus was only a signal that their evening task was only begun and not ended.”

From this time forward there were two political parties in California—one sided with the Missionaries; the other sought their overthrow. The anti-Mission party, as it might be termed, was finally and completely successful in 1845. Then came a general scramble for the property belonging to the Missions, with a shameless disregard for the rights of the Indians. They were robbed of everything—land and all, and sent adrift without a place to lay their heads. The Mexicans divided up their lands among themselves, allowed the Indians to put miserable shanties in the neighborhood of the houses of the new owners of the land, and gave them employment at almost nominal wages. Every Saturday night the pittance allowed them was paid—mostly in whiskey. The consequence was, that the Indians lay drunk until Monday morning, when they were kicked out to work by their self-constituted masters. When we came to California, in 1849, this was the almost universal condition of the Mission Indians. Is it surprising, then, that the whole Indian community, once so industrious and happy, should, under this new system, have sunk to the lowest depths of

degradation, and soon almost disappeared from the face of the earth. Nor is it surprising that the community, the race who robbed and plundered these poor human beings, depriving them of their daily wages, and crowding them by scores, drunk, into their graves, should now themselves be fast passing away. Yes; one by one, they disappear. Where now are those Mexicans and Californians who in 1849 owned their four, five and ten league ranchos, and immense herds of stolen Mission cattle? Yes; where are they now? No one can answer, for no one knows. The destruction of the Indians, which they accomplished, was only a fore-shadowing of their own fate. I will conclude these remarks on the Missions by quoting Miss Skidmore's beautiful little poem, delivered at the Centennial celebration already spoken of: 'tis well to ring the pealing bells, And sing the joyous lay, And make this glad Centennial year One gleeful gala-day; For Freedom's sun, that floods the land With Summer's golden glow, Dawned brightly on the night of gloom One hundred years ago. And dwellers in this favored land, Beside the Western Sea, Be yours an added thrill of joy, A two-fold jubilee! For (sweet and strange coincidence) The bright, benignant glow Of Faith dispelled a deeper gloom, One hundred years ago. All honor to our noble sires— The tried and true-souled band — Whose valor loosed the Gordian knot That bound their native land! Who crushed the tyrant's haughty host And laid his standard low, And bade the Starry Banner wave, One hundred years ago! All honor, too, and deathless fame Unto the brown-robed band, Whose hands released from fetters dread Our glorious Golden Land! Who gained a bloodless victory Against the demon foe, And lifted high the Cross of Faith, One hundred years ago! The sons of Francis journeyed far From wave-washed Monterey, To labor where his saintly name Had blessed our shining Bay. And well those holy toilers wrought To bid Faith's harvests glow And Truth's sweet vineyards ripen fair, One hundred years ago,

14

Nor San Francisco saw alone That fondly toiling band; Their Missions blest full many a spot Within our favored land. And Peace Divine, at their behest, Here arched her Sacred Bow From North to South, from East to West. One hundred years ago. And not alone *one* chosen clime Obeyed this meek control; In Earth's remotest realms they wrought To tame the savage soul. From many a land that wondrous band Had chased the fiendish foe, Long ere they won meek Conquest here, One

hundred years ago. How blest the Children of the Wild Beneath their gentle sway! Not theirs the harsh command that bids The trembling slave obey. Not theirs the stern, despotic tone, The tyrant's cruel blow; By love the meek Franciscans ruled, One hundred years ago. Ah! well the ransomed savage loved The kind, paternal care That with his simple joys could smile, And in his sorrows share; That could the blessed Baptism give, The Bread of Life bestow, And cheer the darksome vale of Death, One hundred years ago. Within the rude adobé shrine, What holy calmness dwelt! How fervent was the savage throng That round its altar knelt! How lowly bowed the dusky brows, When, through the sunset glow, Rang out the sweet-toned Angelus, One hundred years ago! Pure, Eden-like simplicity, Forever passed away! For, o'er the Missions came at last A fierce, tyrannic sway;

15

And sacrilegious hands could dare To strike, with savage blow, The band that brought Salvation's boons, One hundred years ago. But we, who know how rich the gift That holy band bestowed Upon the land where stranger hosts Since made their fair abode; Aye, we who hail the beams of Faith In radiant noonday glow, Will fondly bless the dawn that rose One hundred years ago. O Sovereign City of the West! Enthroned in royal state, Where bows the Bay his shining crest Within thy Golden Gate! Thou'lt ne'er forget, though o'er thy heart Vast living currents flow, The herald steps that trod thy soil, One hundred years ago! And, though the lofty steeples rise From many a sunlit hill, Where through the air, at dusk and dawn, The sweet bell-voices thrill, Thou'lt fondly prize thy Mission shrine, For o'er its portal low First rose the Cross and rang the chime One hundred years ago!

CHAPTER II.

“REFLECTIONS” OF THE “ANNALS”—THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC—OUR TRUE POLICY—THE LONDON TIMES AND THE CIVIL WAR

The authors of the “Annals,” in closing their history of the Missions, on page 54 of that book, give us some of their “reflections” as to the future of the American nation, which we find hard to pass without comment. That the manifest destiny of this nation of ours is to gather under the protection of its wise and benign government every foot of territory of this great continent, no reflecting

person can question. That all the inferior and weak races now found on it are destined to pass away and disappear, there is not a shadow of doubt. But how is this to come to pass? The “Annals” talk as follows:

“Indians, Spaniards of many provinces, Hawaiians, Japanese, Chinese, Malays, Tartars and Russians must all give place to the resistless flood of Anglo-Saxon or American progress.****

“The English in India have already shown how a *beginning* may be made; the Americans on the California coasts and *farther west* will still more develop the modern system of progress. People may differ in opinion as to the equity of the particular steps attending the process.***

“Even while we write its extensive dominions are being separated by a widespread and hitherto successful rebellion into detached kingdoms, under the sway of military chiefs. These, standing alone, and mutually jealous of their conquering neighbors, *may be easily played off one against another* by a white people skilled enough to take advantage of the circumstances, and direct the moves of the political chess-board. So it was with the English in India, and so it may be with the Americans in China. Only give us *time*. England has not been very scrupulous in her stealthy progress over Hindostan, Ceylon and Burmah. Then neither need Americans fear her reproaches if they, in like manner, acquire, conquer or annex the Sandwich Islands, those of the great Malayan Archipelago, or the mighty “Flowery Empire” itself. A few years and a few millions of Americans may realize the gigantic scheme.***And then San Francisco, in the execution and triumph of that scheme, will assuredly become what Liverpool, or even London, is to England, and what New York is to the Middle and Eastern States of America.*****

17

“Long before that time, the English and American people will have finished the last great struggle, which must some day take place between them, for the commercial and political supremacy of the world. It is more than probable that the hosts of English from India and Americans from California will meet on the rich and densely-populated plains of China, and *there* decide their rival pretensions to universal dominion.”

Are we American republicans to acquire territory in this way? Are we to do, as they say the English have done, cross the wide ocean in quest of conquest and booty, embroiling simple and unsuspecting nations in feuds and wars—“playing off one against another,” in the way the authors of the “Annals” so much admire—until these people become an easy prey to pillage and robbery, with cruelty beyond belief?

My young readers, recall to your memory the history of this, your great young republican nation, and see if you can find in any one page of it a warrant for the implications in the above quotation: that we could so forget our great mission, assigned to us so plainly by Providence, of building here, on the virgin soil of this continent, a secure and happy home for the people of all the earth to fly to when down-trodden and oppressed by their own selfish and tyrannical governments. The centennial year finds us in possession of more than six times the extent of territory we had at the close of the War of Independence. Have we acquired a single acre of this great addition with the sword? It is our glory to be able to say we have not. We acquired Louisiana and the immense extent of country in the valley of the Mississippi by purchase from France; the Floridas in the same way from Spain; Texas had acquired her own independence and existed some years as an independent state before we admitted her into our Union. When Mexico made war on us for admitting Texas our armies drove hers before them, until General Scott found himself at the head of a victorious army in the City of Mexico. The whole country lay at our feet, yet what did we do? Did we do as Germany did to France under like circumstances, annex some of her states and then lay her for years under contribution, grinding down her people with taxation? No; we bought California and New Mexico from the conquered people, and paid for them with gold. Alaska we bought from the Russian government. Do we have to keep a standing army to hold all this vast territory? No; not a single man. If we did, the territory would be worthless to us, and we would not retain it, against the will of its own people, a single year.

18

We have got nearly half this continent to bring under our flag. Will our American Congress ever sanction our drawing the sword to do this? No; our past history and the genius of our institutions

forbid it. We will gradually and surely acquire every acre of it, but our means will be peaceful and truly American. We will keep on in the even tenor of our way—with our free churches, with our system of encouraging universal education, with our great national mottoes always in sight, upon which may be said to rest the whole structure of our government: “Equal and exact justice to all;” “The greatest good to the greatest number;” “Freedom to worship God according to the dictates of conscience.”

Who can doubt but that the moral influence of a government thus guided will soon cause State after State to glide quietly into our Union, where they know they will be received as sisters and equals, to share with us all the blessings of such a government? Is this the sort of government or people that the authors of the “Annals” see in their visions of the future of our country, when they see us crossing the great ocean to imitate England's infamous and treacherous tactics of hatching out inveterate hates in the midst of nations, so that when, maddened to half insanity, brother will strike down brother, leaving the instigator of the strife to flap her dark wings over the bloody field of slaughter she inaugurated, and, like all foul birds of prey, there to glut herself on the spoils such contests are sure to bring her? No, my young readers; let us rather see in our visions of the future of the Republic, a united continent under one national banner, so powerful in its physical resources and means of defence as to insure its safety against a united world of enemies; so just, so wise in its dealings with the people of the earth as to challenge universal admiration; so true and faithful to its early history and our great national mottoes as to inspire confidence in the most skeptical. Then we see in this vision of the future a nation with influence and power that will drive tyrants and tyranny from the earth, without shedding one drop of blood, or bringing sorrow to a single household. That influence and power will be felt the world over, hated by injustice and tyranny, loved and extolled by justice and virtue. England will then drop her bloody sword in the Indies, and cease her plundering of those Eastern nations; and forego at home her injustice to 19 Ireland. Then will Poland resume her place as a nation of freemen. Yes; in the shadow of our moral influence and power, all this will come to pass. The flag of the nationalities will everywhere be unfurled, to the dismay of all wicked, robbing nations.

This vision is no phantom; everything points to its realization. Already our influence begins to show itself throughout the world and has struck the shackles from many a fettered limb, and unlocked the door of many a cruel prison.

True to the tactics so much admired by the authors of the “Annals,” England for fifty years fanned the flame of discord in our country, by urging on the freemen of the North against the slave power of the South. Success seemed to crown her efforts, for the time came when brother cut down brother with the fury of madmen; but no sooner had the terrible struggle commenced than England changed her position, and is now found on the side she before denounced; in every possible way she aids those in arms against the Union, hoping soon to see the scattered fragments of the proud young republic at her feet. Great was her disappointment for what she helped to bring about, for a wicked object ended in making this republic ten times more powerful than it was before. It removed forever a terrible evil from our midst, and with it the only question that could divide us sectionally, and endanger our union as one nation. Besides, it manifested to the world our immense resources and power, the extent of which we did not until then ourselves know.

When the civil war commenced the London Times concluded a long article on the “American question” by declaring that “England could send a fleet into Chesapeake Bay and dictate to both North and South terms of peace.” At the close of the war, when Grant and Sherman led their great victorious armies to Washington for a general review, the same paper, in an article on Canada, concluded by declaring “that the question of the final position of that country was now decided, and that if Canada did not want to join the American Union, she must herself keep out of it, for that it was now evidently absurd to suppose that England could, by force of arms, oppose the action of the American government on their own continent.”

CHAPTER III.

THE CONQUEST OF CALIFORNIA—THE ABSURD ACCOUNT OF IT GIVEN IN THE “ANNALS”—EXAGGERATIONS AND MISSTATEMENTS—STOCKTON, KEARNY AND FREMONT—STOCKTON'S MARCH TO LOS ANGELES—HIS RECEPTION AT SAN

FRANCISCO—HIS ALLEGED PROJECT OF INVADING MEXICO—SECOND REDUCTION OF CALIFORNIA.

The next part of the “Annals” worthy of note is the history it gives of “The Conquest of California.” This account is immensely amusing to us '49-ers, who have conversed with so many native Californians and Americans who were personally actors in the scenes of those days, to read over this “history.” As given in the “Annals,” you see that the authors are tired of the belittling process they so freely indulged in while giving their account of the Missions, and now, borrowing the gasconade style from our Mexican neighbors, proceed to the work of making their readers believe that the reduction of California to American rule was one of the most sanguinary and terrible struggles of modern times, when our gallant, heroic leaders met giants in power, all splendidly equipped for war, who fought for their firesides, their altars, their wives and children, with the ferocity of enraged tigers guarding their young; showing on every battlefield by their undaunted courage that they held life as worthless if victory did not strew her laurels around their banner.

The authors of the “Annals” seem to have one object steadily in view in their narrative—the exaltation of Commodore Stockton, which would be harmless but that they do it at the expense of equally deserving and brave men. Colonel Fremont comes next, in their estimation, as deserving of praise. The gallant General Kearny, however, was a failure out here in California, if we are to believe the authors of the “Annals.” The history begins by introducing Colonel Fremont. In doing so they say:

“Col. John C. Fremont is generally considered the conqueror of California. While his exploits, undertaken with so small a force and against such 21 superior numbers, *place him on a par with the famous heroes of the days of chivalry*, yet to the noble, daring and energetic measures adopted and prosecuted by Commodore Robert F. Stockton, as we shall hereafter see, may fairly be attributed the final reduction of the country.”

Commodore Stockton is introduced as follows:

“Commodore Robert F. Stockton arrived at Monterey, on the frigate ‘Congress’ on the fifteenth day of July, 1846, and on the 23d of that month assumed the command of the squadron, Commodore Sloat having left on that day, to return to the United States. The *bold and comprehensive* mind of Stockton perceived at once the circumstances by which he was surrounded. He was deeply impressed with the grave and important trust that devolved upon him. He was not dismayed nor perplexed with the importance of his mission nor the difficulties he was compelled to confront; with a decision of character, promptitude and sagacity worthy of commendation, he adopted a plan of campaign, which, if judged by its results, is *unsurpassed in the most brilliant records of military achievements*.

Then comes an account—full of exaggeration, and so extravagant and absurd that it is not even amusing—of Stockton's chase after the Californians down the coast, with whom he never fairly caught up, and that was not his fault, for they took right good care to keep out of his reach. At length he finds himself in undisputed possession of Los Angeles, without a battle, or the loss of a single man. Now, hear our authors, in their account of this expedition, and I will only quote the last part of it: “The conception *of such an expedition into the heart of an enemy's unknown country* with a force composed principally of sailors unaccustomed to the fatigues and hardships of a long march, to encounter an opposing enemy, of vastly superior numbers, upon their own soil, in defence of their own country, *well armed* and the *best horsemen*, and mounted on the *finest horses in the world*,” equals the *most intrepid courage, indomitable energy, fertility of resource and self-reliance*, such as we find only combined in *minds of the highest order* and characters *cast in heroic moulds*. Yes; despite of all the difficulties which he had to encounter, in the language of the dispatch to the Government: “In less than one month from the time he assumed command he had chased the Mexican army more than one hundred miles along the coast, pursued them into the interior of their own country, *routed and dispersed them*, and secured the territory to the United States; ended the war, restored peace and harmony among the people, and put a civil government into successful operation.” The authors then tell us that after Commodore Stockton left Los Angeles he went on a visit to San Francisco. This trip they describe in characteristic language, as follows: “Everywhere, in his progress throughout the country, the Commodore was greeted with an enthusiastic welcome,

and hailed as the conqueror and deliverer of the country. At San Francisco the entire population of the place and the adjoining country, gave him a formal reception. Men, women and children marched in procession to low water mark to meet him, and addressed him in terms of the most exhaustive praise and admiration!”

The success of Stockton in chasing the California rabble down the coast to Los Angeles seems to have so elated him, if we are to credit the authors of the “Annals,” that he really believed himself to be some wonderful conqueror, for they go on to tell us that he now became possessed of the belief that he could over-run all Mexico with a handful of volunteers raised in California, out of its sparse population. Hear what our authors say on this point, and judge for yourselves if they meant it in ridicule or in sober earnestness. If in earnestness, then they must surely believe they were writing their book for dunces. The probability is, however, that they misrepresented Stockton, and that no such scheme as they attribute to him ever entered seriously into his plans, for he was a man of uncommon good sense and excellent judgment. Here is what they tell us: “He conceived the most magnificent and bold design of recruiting a force of volunteers in California from among the American population then about settling in the territory, sailing with them to Acapulco, then starting across the continent to unite with the force of General Taylor, then, as he supposed, approaching the City of Mexico. Certainly, a more daring, brilliant and master stroke of military sagacity has never been conceived. It reminds us of the famous exploits of the most renowned heroes of modern and ancient times.” If there ever was a vague idea in Stockton's mind of marching through Mexico with his sailors and volunteers, it was dissipated by the news which reached him, immediately after his arrival in San Francisco from Southern California. The news was that the Californians had driven his men out of Los Angeles, and were vowing vengeance, and murdering every straggling American they could lay their hands on. There was no alternative under those circumstances but to retrace his steps and do his work all over again. He knew the terrible heroes he had to encounter, or, more properly speaking, to run after, but, nothing daunted, he summoned all his available forces, and sailed with them for San Pedro.

He arrived there about the 23d of October, and landed his forces, “in the face of the enemy,” as the “Annals” have it. The enemy, as a matter of course, fled; but Stockton was a little cautious, for

some reason or other, and instead of following up the flying Californians, he re-embarked his men and sailed for San Diego. This town he found in possession of a few swaggering Californians, who beat a hasty retreat, as usual, at sight of the American! Then comes an account of Stockton's second reduction of California, in which two "terrible" battles were fought. The march through the country is described as follows, on page 120 of the "Annals:"

"Their route lay through a rugged country, drenched with the Winter rain, and bristling with the lances of the enemy. Through this the Commodore led his seamen and marines, sharing himself, with the General at his side (Kearny), all the hardships of the common sailor. The stern engagements with the enemy derive their heroic features from the contrast existing in the condition of the two. The Californians were *well mounted and whirled their flying artillery* to the most convenient positions. Our troops were on foot mired to the ankle, and with no resources, except their own indomitable resolution and courage. Their exploits may be left in the shadow by the clouds that roll up from the plains of Mexico, but they are realities *here*, which impress themselves with a force which reaches the very foundations of social order."

If the part of this quotation means anything, it means to say that all the battles fought by General Taylor and General Scott in Mexico were but as smoke when compared to the might battles fought by Stockton in California. Commodore Stockton may well exclaim, "Save me from my friends." The first opposition the Americans met with was at Rio San Gabriel. There the Californians made a futile effort to dispute the passage of this stream, and, using the crest of a high cliff, were enabled to annoy the Americans very much while they were engaged in crossing their guns. The crossing being effected, the Californians, as usual, ran away; or, to speak more politely, retreated as fast as their horses could take them. This skirmish should be regarded as one of the greatest battles of the whole war, for the Californians succeeded in killing two sailors and wounding nine others. The next day the Californians made a stand on 24 the Plains of Mesa, about six miles from Rio San Gabriel, and all accounts agree that in this case they did make a sort of a little fight, in which several Californians were wounded and many of them lost their mustangs. They did not suffer much, however, from the loss of horses, as those unhorsed and wounded soon found places behind those who were more fortunate, and very soon the whole motley rabble fled *never again to reassemble*,

amid the loud cheering and boisterous laughter of the Americans. It is said that the Californian commander never forgave Stockton and Kearny for allowing their men to indulge in this laughing. They insist that it was a breach of good manners that gentlemen should not have been guilty of towards a fallen foe. It is said, also, that whenever these same Californian commanders proposed to one of their countrymen to raise another crowd to contend once more with the Americans, the party addressed immediately met the proposition with a loud laugh, intended to imitate the Americans' laughing on that day. So it may be said that the Americans in the end laughed California away from Mexico, as the old Whig party once sung the Democrats out of office and themselves into their snug places. Now let me quote the "Annals" account of this battle, just for your amusement:

"The Californians made a gallant charge. It is said by those who witnessed it to have been a brilliant spectacle. Gayly caparisoned, with banners flying, mounted on fleet and *splendid* horses (!!!), they dashed on, spurring to the top of their speed, on the small but compact square into which the American force was compressed. The very earth appeared to tremble beneath their thundering hoofs, and nothing seemed capable of resisting *such cavalry*. But inspired with the cool courage and indomitable heroism of their leader, his men patiently awaited the result. The signal was at length given, and a deadly fire, discharged according to orders at the horses, was poured into the ranks of the advancing foe, which emptied many saddles and threw them into complete confusion. Retreating a few hundred yards, they again formed, and, dispatching a part of their force to the rear, they attacked simultaneously three sides of the square. Orders were renewed to reserve fire until the enemy's nearer approach, and with the same decisive results, their ranks breaking up and retreating in disorder. A third time, having rallied, they returned to the charge; but once more their ranks were thinned by the deadly aim of the assailed, and, despairing of their ability to cope with men so cool, unflinching, resolute—confused and discomfited, they scattered and fled in every direction."

The three principal commanders in the reduction of California to American rule, Stockton, Kearny and Fremont, were as brave and gallant men as ever walked the deck of a ship in battle, or 25 led an army on the field. They stood in no need of all this bombast and absurd exaggeration at the hands of the authors of the "Annals." They captured every town that needed to be captured; they chased every army and rabble that it was necessary to chase and disperse; they killed every man that it was

necessary to kill, which fortunately proved to be very few; they acted with consideration towards their own people, and with good faith, justice, and, in fact, with great kindness, to the native Californians. Not one tyrannical, selfish act has ever been laid to their charge; except, perhaps, as to Fremont in one case. It is asserted that he had the two De Harro brothers shot down while approaching him with a flag of truce. I sincerely hope that this charge may originate in some grave mistake, and may, on a thorough investigation, be found to be groundless, for it is the only solitary instance in which any of our commanders are charged with an objectionable act. As a rule, our commanders showed great prudence and uncommonly good judgment, in all deserving well of their countrymen, and they have all been honored by them. The slurs of the “Annals” towards General Kearny fall harmless, for he was vindicated by his government, and honored by the whole people. It is a cause of just pride to us all that our government intrusted the work here necessary to be done to such faithful and able commanders; but the fact that all this can be truly said, is no reason for misrepresenting the true state of the country at the time of its acquisition by our government. The history of the past must be the guide for future generations; therefore, it should be truly given. It is unworthy of Americans, and not like them, to indulge in boastful laudations of their own exploits. With them the simple truth of history in regard to their country is glorious enough, and is all they wish or ask to go on record. At the date of Stockton's arrival in California—July, 1846—the Mexican people of the territory were, as a whole, a poor, miserable race—mostly half-breed Indians-lazy, indolent and without any ambition, and terribly demoralized in their lives. The most of them were not only bad material for soldiers, but were absolutely determined not to fight. There were men, of course—a nearly pure blood Castilian class—who were altogether superior to the great mass of the population. They were, however, insignificant in number, when looked to as material for an army. Most of 26 these families were in favor of continuing their connection with Mexico, because they knew that through that connection they gained their importance and rank over the Indians and half-breeds, and their means of living in ease and comfort. They were in favor of it, just as a business proposition, and not through national pride or any particular love of Mexico. On the contrary, they rather despised Mexico, and would long since have cut loose from her, if the connection had not *paid them* in a financial point of view. This being their position, they appear from the first to have made up their minds not to risk too much in the struggle with the Americans

— *certainly not their lives*. Besides, they were wholly unprepared, and almost destitute of the necessary munitions and equipments for war. They had a few old, rusty, worthless cannon, taken from the Missions, a few long swords, in the use of which they were entirely unskilled; but the swords were so few in number that their want of skill in the use of them made very little difference. They had carbines and pistols—few in number, however, mostly about such as were used by the brigands in the mountains of Europe one hundred years before. As to wagons or wheeled vehicles of any description, they may be said to have been wholly destitute; for all they had were the unwieldy Californian carts, known among Americans as California steamers. The wheels of these carts were about two feet and a half in diameter, cut from the trunk of a sycamore tree, in one solid piece; each wheel weighing about three hundred pounds. To these carts were attached half wild California oxen, with the most primitive sort of harness. Such were their means of transportation.

General Sherman, in his “Memoirs,” page 19, alludes to the want of all sorts of wagons in Monterey, in January, 1847, the date of his first arrival in California. He says:

“Immediate preparations were made for landing, and, as I was quartermaster and commissary, I had plenty to do. There was a small wharf and an adobe custom-house in possession of the navy; also a barrack of two stories, occupied by some marines, commanded by Lieutenant Maddox; and on a hill to the west of the town had been built a two-story block house of hewed logs, occupied by a guard of sailors under command of Lieutenant Baldwin, United States Navy. Not a single modern wagon or ox-cart was to be had in Monterey. Nothing but the old Mexican cart with wooden wheels, drawn by two or three pairs of oxen, yoked by the horns. A man named Tom Cole had two or more of these, and he came into immediate requisition.”

27

Of all the absurd things that are told of in the “Annals” in relation to the conquest of California, the most absurd is what they tell us of California horses. They talk of them as the “finest horses in the world,” and of the California cavalry as “the finest mounted cavalry in the world;” when the fact is, that this race of California horses is the most miserable and contemptible known to exist in the world. They are a sort of mustang breed, with neither strength, long endurance nor size. Their

general color is a wornout, muddy mixture of all colors. They are intractable, unreliable—being almost in their natures untamable—and have to be subdued and broken in after every short rest given to them. They are utterly unfit for draught purposes, and were seldom or never used for such by the Californians. They were used for horseback riding altogether. A Californian would catch one of these mustangs out of the herd, bridle him with a Mexican bridle, that has a bit so severe that he can break the jaw of the animal, if he wishes. He saddles it with a saddle that has a cincha, or girth, so contrived that he can draw it tight enough to break in the animal's ribs, if he sees fit to do so. He then rigs himself with a pair of Mexican spurs, that have barbs three or four inches long in the rowels, with which he can tear out the bowels of his horse. Then, taking his riata in his hand, he leaps on the unfortunate brute and spurs it on at the top of his speed, without feeling or mercy, for the next four or five days; in all that time scarcely giving it a bit to eat. When so worn out as to be unable to carry its rider a mile further, the bridle and saddle are taken off, and the animal turned back into the herd—the mouth all lacerated and sore, the flanks streaming with blood, and the body swollen from the saddle. Then another animal is taken from the herd, to be treated in exactly the same way. This was the universal treatment horses received in California before the American rule, and it is not surprising, therefore, that such treatment and brutality produced the miserable stock of horses we found the Californians in possession of when we came to the State in forty-nine. The California mustang is not even a respectable apology for the noble animal we distinguish as a horse. Happily, the California Legislature has taken the matter in hand, and by judicious enactments secured the extinction of the whole miserable breed.

28

Now, what did the California army itself consist of? From the way the “Annals” speak of the California forces, one would be led to suppose that those armies consisted of splendidly drilled cavalry regiments, well mounted, well clothed, well fed, and well armed. The truth is, however, that there was no such thing as a well drilled company of a hundred men, at any time, in the service of the California leaders. There may have been three or four hundred men, on one or two occasions, who were willing to fight and do their duty as soldiers; but, taken as a whole, the forces under the command of the California generals consisted of all the vaqueros throughout the country, gathered

together by the call of the leading Californians to assist in driving the Americans out of the country, which they were perfectly sure they could do by a show of numbers, without striking a blow. They were undrilled, and unarmed to a great extent; but they had great reliance on their riatas, and a good deal more on the fleetness of their mustangs, in case they should find it necessary to retreat, or, in plain English, to run away. The generals found them plenty of beef and frijoles; so every young Californian and strolling Indian, in the whole country, mounted his best mustang and went to the war, just as he would have gone to a frolic or a fandango.

When the Americans came in sight, though they were few in number—not over four or five hundred, perhaps, at any one time—yet this number astonished the vaqueros, for they had never seen so many Americans together before. The first sight was generally enough for most of them; and well regulated little detachments of four, five, and sometimes ten or twenty, were soon seen on the *retreat*—rather fast, too. When the Commander remonstrated with some of these parties, they coolly declared that they “had only gone on a pasear, that they had much business at home requiring their immediate attention,” and after thanking the General, in the most polite terms (politeness is a characteristic of all Californians) for the entertainment he had given them, bade him adieu, telling him at the same time to “be sure to drive the Americans out of the country, for they were a very bad people.” When deserted in this way, the generals, colonels and captains had nothing to do but to mount their handsomely caparisoned mustangs, fold their graceful and beautifully ornamented cloaks around their shoulders, and with dignity retreat before the triumphant Americans. There were many other 29 battles in this war of subjugation the “Annals” are silent on; but they were all of the same insignificant character. In connection with them there were many ludicrous instances, which, if I had space to relate, would enable one to enjoy a hearty laugh. The desire of all who have heretofore written of this California war to manufacture something grand and imposing out of its conduct has prevented the unvarnished truth from ever finding its way into print. If the history of this war was faithfully written out, it would give us a most amusing as well as interesting volume. In such a volume should appear Colonel Fremont's capture of San Rafael. In the report of the War Department, the capture of this town figures as one of the great exploits of modern times. The truth was about as follows: Colonel Fremont had collected a handful of followers on a hill not far from

the old Mission of San Rafael. He wished to make the Mission his headquarters; so, with a drum and fife, he marched his forces and took possession of the main buildings of the Mission, meeting with no resistance whatever. At this time there was no resident priest at the Mission, and only a few straggling Californians, who called it their home. These withdrew on Fremont's appearance; there were just two white men residents—Don Timothy Murphy, an old Irishman, who had been on this coast for many years, and old man Black, an American, also an old-time pioneer. These two friends were found by Colonel Fremont's men seated on the porch of the old Mission building playing old-sledge. They had a jug of whisky between them, and the winner of each game had a right to take a drink, while the other had to remain dry. The victorious army of Fremont at once confiscated the whisky in the name of the United States. It is said that Murphy and Black, up to the time of their deaths, never forgave Fremont for this act of lawlessness in his men, and always declared their intention of having him court-martialed. If the reader will compare this true account with the official account given of the capture of San Rafael, it will give a good idea of what the war of the conquest of California really was. The “Annals” say that “most of the California forces were cavalry.” As a matter of course, every Californian rode a mustang, and a man who would agree to go to the field of battle on foot would have been deemed crazy and no soldier at all, for there was nothing the Californians felt a more soldierly pride in than the celerity of their retreats. In this sort of military movement they seldom lost a man. They had the “finest horses in the world,” and were truly “the finest cavalry in the world,” for just that one military movement. That the Californians should excel in this great act of war is not surprising, when we consider with what perseverance they practiced it, from the first day Wm. B. Ide raised the Bear Flag in Sonoma to the closing scene of the war south of Los Angeles. When the “Annals” talk of “flying artillery” and “the country bristling with lances,” and “masked batteries,” and the like, of course it is to be understood in a poetical sense, for they had no existence, except in the brains of the authors of the “Annals.”

CHAPTER IV.

CONDITIONS WHICH MADE THE CONQUEST OF CALIFORNIA AN EASY ONE—THE MURDER OF FOSTER—THE TELL-TALE REVOLVER—THE VAQUERO'S STORY—

CAPTURE OF MARIANA—HIS EXAMINATION—SUBSEQUENT ESCAPE—MR. BREEN's STORY—THE OLD WOMAN AND THE DYING MAN—MR. BREEN AND THE MAN—THE MEXICAN's CONFESSION—THE MURDER OF HIS AFFIANCED AND AN AMERICAN—DEATH OF THE CARY BROTHERS—THE MEXICAN's MURDER OF HIS OWN FRIEND—HIS REMORSE—FATHER ANZER's VISITS—THE BURIAL—OTHER MURDERS.

Besides the miserable plight the Californians found themselves in, for making a successful stand against the Americans, when Stockton began his work of subduing the country, there were other causes which helped the Americans. Nearly all the Missionary Fathers who yet remained in the State were glad to see Mexican rule go down, as they believed their chance for religious freedom was much better under the flag of the United States than under that of Mexico; so they everywhere threw their influence to prevent resistance to the Americans. Then there were several prominent Americans married to daughters of leading Californians, which had a great influence with those families to privately side with the Americans. As a general rule, the California women liked the Americans, and this was no small help towards reconciling the native Californians to their new national connection. However, the good judgement with which our generals treated the Californians wherever they obtained power over them, did more to induce the whole people to quietly acquiesce in the new order of things, than all the other causes taken together; and it is no vain boast to say that in the history of the world there never was a conquered people so friendly with their conquerors after the contest was ended, as were the native Californians with the Americans at the close of the war. Their intercourse has ever since been of the most friendly and kindest character. In this remark, of course, I allude to the well educated, intelligent class, who were the governing people under 32 Mexican rule, and not to the low, ignorant, thieving vagabonds, who for years afterwards tormented the country by their villainies and who had not the courage to meet the Americans in fair fight, during the war, while hating them with the bitterest intensity. At the hands of these villains many a lonely traveler met a bloody fate. This was particularly so in the lower or rural counties, along the coast from San Francisco to Los Angeles, where the American population was small and sparse. Two, three, and sometimes five, of these desperate spirits would bind themselves with a solemn oath of fidelity to each other, and of vengeance against all Americans. Their practice was to lie in

wait on the most traveled roads to and from San Francisco, and to the other large towns of the State, and rob and murder all who fell unprotected into their hands. But, not satisfied with this slow way of reaching victims worth robbing, they often came to San Francisco, Sacramento, or Stockton; and with cunning and adroitness, would seek out some American who had been lucky in the mines, and had, therefore, plenty of “dust.” They would then ingratiate themselves into such a man's favor, by obliging him in many small ways, and after gaining his confidence, would propose to him some very profitable speculation—generally of buying cattle in the southern part of the State—where they would pretend to know of a band of fine fat cattle, which could be bought for almost a song. The unwary American, often and often, fell into this trap. Suspecting no treachery, he would pack up his gold, and trust himself and it to the pretended friend, to lead the way to the cheap cattle in the far-off, lonesome south. Months and months would pass before the first suspicion would arise as to the fate of the cattle speculators, who had never returned, and then no one had time to think, or say much, about the circumstance. This was the fate of many a man in '49, '50, and '51. At last, an undefined sort of a feeling of mystery and suspicion spread through the community as to the strange fact that so many Americans who went south for cattle never returned. This aroused an alarm that effectually destroyed all confidence in Californians as guides to the lower country for cattle. In one instance I knew of, the murderers were discovered, though the principal one escaped punishment. I will relate this circumstance from memory; and, as it is a long time ago, I may possibly make some mistakes, but not in the main facts. It was related to me in 1852, by Mr. Riddle, a 33 friend of the murdered man, then living on the Tuolumne river.

Savage and Foster were partners in the cattle business, and lived near Stockton in 1849 and '50. They purchased small bands of cattle, as they could find them, and furnished the butchers of Stockton and the neighboring mining camps with beef cattle, as they might require them. They made money fast in this business.

There was a Mexican, known by the name of Mariana, who lived mostly in Stockton at this time, in the same business. He seemed always to have money at his command, and often joined Savage and Foster in these trips looking up fat cattle, buying little bands on his own account for the Stockton market. He took great pains to ingratiate himself into the good opinion of the American cattle men,

and succeeded well. They thought he was one of the very best of men, and were willing to trust him in any way. He had often told them of how cheap cattle could be purchased near Los Angeles, and at length proposed that one of the partners should take a trip with him, and get a large band of cattle at low prices in the lower country. The great profit to be made on such a trip induced them to accede to his proposition. So they collected all the money they could get together, some five or six thousand dollars, and Foster started with Mariana in pursuit of the enterprise, each taking a vaquero with him. Foster's vaquero was an American; Mariana's was a Californian. Savage remained in Stockton, but heard nothing from his partner after his departure. In some two months Mariana came back to Stockton with a fine band of cattle. When met by Savage he expressed great astonishment that Foster had not got home. He then went on to say that when they reached Los Angeles, Foster, hearing of a band of cattle further south that were offered very cheap, insisted, contrary to his (Mariana's) advice, in going to see them. So they parted, while he himself went to the rancho they had originally started for, bought his cattle, and started with them up the coast, supposing Foster had taken his cattle by the Tulare county way, which would be the shortest for him if he got the cattle he went for. He, therefore, expected to find Foster at home before him. This all seemed plausible enough; so matters rested, and no one had the least suspicion of foul play. No Foster came, however, and all began to give him up, and could not account for his disappearance. Savage one day sauntered into Mariana's camp, 34 or shanty, as he had often done before, when, to his astonishment, he saw lying on the table before Mariana, a beautiful silver mounted revolver belonging to himself, which he had lent Foster the day they parted. This pistol was presented to Savage by a brother of his, and this fact Foster knew, and promised to be very careful of it, and return it safely. A new light flashed on Savage's mind the moment he saw the pistol; but, concealing his feelings, he said, carelessly, as he took up the revolver, "Why, this belonged to Foster." Mariana gave a sudden start; but, instantly recovering himself, he said, "Oh, yes; I gave a big price for it to Foster. I gave him a hundred and fifty dollars. It is not worth it, but I took a fancy to it, and he would not sell it for less." "That *was* a good price for it, sure enough," said Savage, in the same careless voice; and as he spoke he walked out of the shanty. He walked slowly at first, but then quickened his pace, and just as he did so he involuntarily turned half round and looked back at the shanty, and there stood Mariana leaning out of the door, evidently watching him, and as Savage

looked back he at once withdrew out of sight. "Ah!" said Savage, "I fear he knows I suspect him, and was watching my motions. I am sorry I walked so fast." Savage now, as quickly as possible, assembled some friends and told them what he had discovered. The majority thought it was best to take the matter slowly, and watch Mariana's movements. In pursuance of this idea, and to quiet any suspicions Mariana might have that he was suspected by Savage, no one went near his camp until late in the afternoon. Two of the party who were on the most friendly terms with Mariana then went to his camp, on the pretence of business, but to their surprise the shanty was locked, and on looking around they found both of Mariana's fine horses gone, and there was a something about the little house that said plainly, "You come too late; I am deserted." They now unhesitatingly broke open the door, and, on entering, found everything in confusion, as if the owner had just selected whatever was of much value and could be conveniently taken away, and abandoned everything else. Then there was great excitement among the Americans, and Savage remembered that the vaquero who was with Mariana at the time he left Stockton with Foster was yet in his employment, and now most likely with his cattle out on the plains a little beyond French Camp. So, five well mounted and well armed men were dispatched to find the vaquero, and they had some hopes of finding Mariana with him; but some feared that if he had really fled he had taken the vaquero, too; but in this respect they were mistaken, for they found the vaquero. They brought him to Stockton, and, on consultation with all the friends, they determined to try to extort from him a confession. So, placing a rope on his neck, they led him to a lonesome place outside the town, and threw the end of the rope over a limb of a tree, as if about to hang him from it. Up to this time the vaquero remained sullen and stolid in his whole way of acting; but, seeing death so close at hand, he addressed Savage, and asked what they were going to kill him for. Savage told him for helping Mariana to murder Foster and his vaquero. He then said, "I know where you can find Mariana; and, if you do not kill me, I will tell you, and tell you all about Foster and his vaquero." There was now intense excitement to hear the fate of poor Foster and all the Californian had to communicate. So the promise of life was readily given, cautioning the wretch not to tell any lies, for that if he did so they would be sure to detect him, and in that case they would burn him alive. He agreed to these conditions, and said he could prove to them that all he was about to tell them was true. He had been placed standing on an old log, under the tree they were going to hang him from. Now, without asking to have the rope

removed from his neck, he slipped down to a sitting posture, the rope still on the limb and yet in the grasp of determined men, who looked as if anxious for the signal that was to launch the poor wretch into eternity. It was a dark night, but one of the party had collected dried branches and lit up a fire, which soon threw its lurid glare over the vigilantes and their prisoner, as, with revolvers in hand, every one of them crowded around him in breathless silence to listen to his statement, which was to reveal the fate of Foster and his vaquero. His story was about as follows:

“At about noon to-day Mariana came to the camp where I was taking care of the cattle, and told me that Savage had seen Foster's pistol, which he had just taken out of his valise for the first time since he got back from the lower country, and that, from the way Savage looked and acted, he was satisfied that he suspected him of murdering Foster, and that, on that account, he had made up his mind to leave the country for the present. He then told me that if he never came back, I could have the 36 cattle I was herding for what he owed me, and the shanty and things in it, in Stockton, and then he handed me this bill of sale of everything, so that no one could dispute my title.” As the vaquero said this, he drew from his shirt pocket a paper, written in Spanish, and handed it to Savage, and then continued: “Mariana then told me that if Savage or any of the Americans asked for him, to deceive them as long as possible, and give out that news had reached him from Mexico of his father's death; and that he had to leave in great haste, but expected to be back in three months. I then asked him for some money, and he told me he was going to San Jose, where nearly all his money was deposited with a friend, and that he would leave three hundred dollars there for me. He then left me, taking the direct road to San Jose, and I believe he has gone there, for I know he usually did keep his money there.”

Now the vaquero paused, and seemed almost to choke as he leaned his head forward, with forehead clasped in both hands. Recovering himself in a moment, he proceeded—not, however, until he was reminded of the necessity of doing so by a jerk on the rope, and an angry voice saying, “Now tell us all about Foster and his man.”

“The first day we left Stockton,” he went on, “we did not go far. We camped about a mile after crossing the ferry on the San Joaquin river, where there was good shade and grass for our animals.

After eating our evening meal, Foster and his vaquero lay on the grass asleep, and Mariana and I lay there also; but we did not sleep. After a little Mariana made a signal to me to follow him. He led the way into the tules for some distance, until we came to an open spot. Then he threw himself on the ground, and I also sat down. For the first time, I learned from him that he intended to kill the Americans, and take their gold. I did not want to have anything to do with it, and told him so. I said that Foster had always treated me well, and I could not kill him. He swore at me; called me a coward; said it was no harm to kill an American; that they had stolen California from Mexico, and killing one of them was just the same as killing a man in battle. He said that all the gold in this country of right belonged to the Mexicans, and that it was the duty of every Mexican to kill every American he could, and take all their gold. He said Foster had five thousand dollars in his valise, and that I should have half. So, after awhile, I agreed, and it was settled ³⁷ that Mariana should keep close to Foster that night, and I close to his vaquero, and that, as they slept, Mariana was to give me a signal, and that we were both to strike with our knives at the same moment. I wanted to use our pistols, but Mariana would not agree, because, he said, a cap might miss with either of us, and that, in that case, one or both of us would lose our lives. So it was all arranged, and, after looking at our knives, to see if they were all right and sharp, we returned to the camp. We found Foster sitting up, smoking a cigar. Mariana told him we had been looking for rabbits, but could find none. I thought Foster did not look satisfied, and several times found his eyes on me during the evening, as if he was suspicious. This, and the work we were to do that night, made me tremble with fear. Mariana appeared just the same as always, though he told me afterwards that he observed Foster looking at him very hard once or twice. Night came, and we went to sleep, just as agreed on. Mariana pretended to sleep soundly, and so did I; but we were both wide awake, and we could see that Foster lay awake for a long time. At length sleep seemed to overpower him, though I thought I observed him, struggling against it. Mariana now raised to a half sitting position, as was agreed on, and at this signal I was to do the same. Then Mariana was to raise his arm, and I was to do the same, but our hands were to have nothing in them. Then we were to lie back in our former position. Then, after waiting a few moments, Mariana was to do just as he had done before, and I was to follow; but this time we were to have our knives in our hands, with the blades concealed from sight in our sleeves. Then we were to lean forward, each over his man, and Mariana, when ready, was to

nod his head twice, and, if I returned his nod the second time, we were both to strike, and follow blow after blow until we were sure they were dead. On this night, I returned all Mariana's signals until it came to the last nod of his head, when to my astonishment I saw the vaquero's eyes wide open, staring at me. Instead of returning the nod, I put my hand on my stomach and pretended to be in a cramp. The American was lying with his face towards me, and had not seen any of Mariana's signals, nor had he seen the knife in my hand, for it was partly concealed in my sleeve, so he was deceived and believed me, and rose, saying he had some first-rate brandy a friend had given him, and that it would do me good. He brought the flask, and I took a good 38 long drink, which restored me to myself, for I shook with fear. He lit a cigar, and before he had finished smoking the day was dawning. As we were watering our horses that morning Mariana stood very near me, and, with his back to me, he said in a low voice, that I could scarcely hear, "We are watched; do not come near me to-day, or speak to me on any pretense; but answer my signals to-night just the same as you did last night, and make sure work of it, or our lives are not worth a real." Without changing his position, or waiting to hear if I had anything to say, he broke into a Spanish song he was in the habit of singing, and when the horses were done drinking, walked to where Foster stood, and commenced a very pleasant conversation with him. At first I made up my mind that I would hang back, and run away where no one was observing me, but all that day I found Mariana's eyes on me, no matter where I turned. I then thought I would pretend to be asleep that night and not see his signals; but just before we camped, Mariana rode up to me, as if to give me an additional riata to stake out my horse with, and as he leaned forward in his saddle to give me the riata, his lips seemed to shrink back from his teeth, giving his face a terribly fierce look, while he whispered, just between his teeth, "If we fail to-night, it will be your fault, and I will not die until I see your bones given to the buzzards to pick." I never saw such a devilish look before on his face, and I felt as if I dare not disobey him. So the night came. We were in the pass in the mountains, and all prepared their places to sleep, as on the preceding night; but now Mariana pretended to have a bad headache, and told us that such turns lasted him generally two days, and begged Foster to remain over one day, if he was not better in the morning, as he could not travel in the hot sun. To this Foster agreed, and the request undoubtedly threw him off his guard, for both he and his vaquero were evidently sound asleep. Early in the night Mariana gave the signal. I followed, as if in a dream, and as if I could

not disobey. We both struck on his second nod. Mariana's blow went home through Foster's body, and, with one loud moan, he was dead. My arm was weak and trembling, and the blade of my knife struck against a silver watch in the vaquero's pocket, from which it glanced along the ribs and never entered the vitals. With a bound the vaquero was on his feet, but his pistol and knife were both under his saddle, upon which his head rested for a pillow. 39 He made a dash for them. Catching up the saddle, he flung it into my face, knocking my revolver out of my hand. He grasped his knife and revolver, but just as he raised them up a ball from Mariana's pistol brought him to the ground, and then Mariana's knife did the rest.

We dragged the bodies to a deep, dry arroyo, threw some brush and stuff on them, and, without waiting for daylight, saddled up and took all the horses and traps with us. Just after daylight we turned out of the trail, and camped. Here we burned up all the things belonging to the Americans that we did not want, and continued on our journey towards San Jose. There we made a halt, and Mariana told me he left Foster's money with a friend in that town until he should return, as he had enough of his own to purchase what cattle he wanted. He has, from time to time, given me money, but never much; and I have always been afraid he would kill me to get rid of me, and he would have done so, I know, but for his oath; for he once told me that with three others he took a solemn oath never to spare an American whose life he could take without discovery, and never, on any account, to take the life of a Mexican.”

When the vaquero finished this terrible story, the crowd withdrew for consultation, and it was decided that four or five should prepare themselves and take the vaquero to the scene of the murder, and that another party should mount the best horses to be found in Stockton, and ride with all possible speed, that very night, for San Jose. The vaquero agreed to act as guide to the spot where poor Foster and his vaquero met their bloody fate. On reaching there, the remains of the Americans were found in the arroyo, as described by the vaquero. On returning to Stockton the vaquero was placed in jail until news should be received from San Jose. When the party which had gone to capture Mariana came within a few miles of San Jose they camped on the Coyote creek and waited for night to close in. In the darkness of evening they rode at full speed into the town and made directly for a Spanish gambling-house. In this way, before any one knew of their approach, they had

surrounded the gambling-table in this establishment, and were not disappointed in finding Mariana; for there he sat, deeply interested in a game in which he had just ventured some hundreds of dollars. They soon made known their business; and, without resistance, marched Mariana off. Some of the party wanted to take him at 40 once out of town and hang him to the first tree that came in their way, but others urged to wait until they should hear that the remains of Foster and his vaquero were found, thus making sure of Mariana's guilt. Mariana protested innocence, and he had many friends in San Jose who besought moderation in his behalf. He was finally lodged in jail and safely guarded that night by the men who had arrested him. The next day he was taken out for examination before some judge or justice of the peace, and duly committed for trial; but, after his examination, on his way back to the jail, he made his escape from the officers, and was never recaptured. When my friend Riddle told me this story, he insisted that Mariana's escape was connived at by some of the San Jose officials, for which he said they were well paid. I have since been told that this charge was unjust; but what the truth is I cannot pretend to say. When the people of San Joaquin heard of Mariana's escape they were furious, and denounced the San Jose sheriff and his officials in no measured terms. In the excitement that ensued, they rushed to the jail and, taking out the vaquero, hanged him forthwith, in violation of the promises made him.

Mr. Patrick Breen, a pioneer of 1846 or '47 from the State of Missouri, and who lived for many years in San Juan, Monterey county, where he has left a well raised and prosperous family to perpetuate his good name, related to me another circumstance that will further illustrate the character of those days. It is now over sixteen years since Mr. Breen told me the story, so I do not pretend to use his language, but in substance it was as follows:

MR. BREEN's STORY.

Very early one morning in the Summer of 1851, I was walking along the corridor in front of the old Mission building that joins the Mission Church, in San Juan. As I came to the west end of the building, I heard deep groans in one of the old dark rooms that opened on the corridor. The door was partly open, so I entered to ascertain the cause of the moans, or groans, I heard so plainly. In the back room I found a man, lying on a miserable bed, apparently in great pain. On a seat near

the bed sat a very old woman, looking more like an Indian than a Californian. She was dark and shriveled, yet her eyes were bright and had not a bad expression. I addressed the old woman politely in the 41 language of the country, asking what was the matter with the sick man, and if he was some friend or relative of hers. She answered, politely, that he was no relation of hers, but he was a sick countryman, and she came to see if she could help him in any way. The man now turned his eyes towards me for a moment, and I thought there was almost a fierce light in them. He then beckoned the woman to draw near. She did so, and leaned over him with her ear close to his lips. In a husky whispering, which I heard plainly, however, he said: "Tell that man to go away; he is a cursed American." I did not pretend to hear, but waited for the old woman to speak. She turned to me and said that the sick man requested to be left alone. There was something about the appearance of the man that struck me strangely. He had evidently once been a fine looking man, but now his flesh had wasted from his frame; his eyes were large, bright and fierce, but death shone plainly in them. My curiosity was aroused to know something more about him; so, as I turned to go, without speaking, I beckoned the woman to follow me to the corridor. She did so, and when there I asked her who the man was. She said: "It is no use now for any one to know, for he is dying; but even now I dare not tell you until he is dead. He has been a terrible, bad man; but now it is all over. In a day or two more he will no longer be of this world. He once helped me when I was in sore need of help. So I am bound to do all I can for him in return." "Has Padre Anzer been to see him?" said I. "No. When I spoke to him of calling the Padre, he grew perfectly wild, so that I could hardly hold him in bed. He said such terrible things that frightened me, so that I have given up all hope. Oh!" said the old woman, clasping her hands in horror, "the devil surely owns him already, and will not let the Padre near him." I asked her if she had anything for him to eat, or money to get it with. She said he had not a dollar, and that he had asked her for some baker's bread, but that she had no money to get it, so she got him some of her home-made cakes, and fed them to him with a little milk she got from my wife. I then gave her a little money, and told her to tell the man that I would like to see him, as I was a sort of a doctor, and might do him good, and would charge him nothing. The woman shook her head, and said: "Oh! he hates all Americans; I do not think there is any use in asking him." I told her to try, anyway, and tell him that I was an Irishman. "Ah!" said she, "he hates 42 them, too; but I will try." That afternoon the woman came and told me that

the sick man would see me. I went two or three times to see him, but did not try to enter into any conversation. I contented myself with doing a few things for his comfort, and my wife gave him a couple of new flannel shirts, clean sheets and a blanket for his bed. He seemed to be sinking away in a low fever. I gave the old woman some lemons to make the necessary cooling drink. On the second day, just as I was leaving his room, he told the woman to call me back. When I returned, he pointed to a chair near the bed, and then motioned to the woman to leave the room. When we were alone he asked me abruptly why I took any interest in him, and why I did not let him die like a dog. I said he was a human being, like myself, and I thought it was only right to relieve his sufferings, if I could do so; and that that was the only reason I took any interest in him. "Have you any idea who I am?" "None in the least," said I, "nor do I care." "Well," said he, with a grim half smile on his face, "if you knew that you would not stay in the same room with me for one moment." As he spoke, there was a fearful, almost devilish expression in his eyes. I involuntarily shrank away from him; but, recovering myself, I said in a careless tone: "No matter what you have been, your day is now closing, and I have no right to be your judge, and I would like to help you in any way I could to die a penitent death." "A penitent death! a penitent death!" he repeated, over and over, with a sort of a chuckling laugh. "There is no repentance for me now; it is too late. It is all over. Hell is ready to receive me. Every night I see the fiends, who are to plunge me in, waiting for me. Oh, yes; my hell has commenced, and your talk of repentance is humbug." I now thought I would assume a bolder tone, and see what effect it would have, so I said: "When you were a child you were baptized a Catholic Christian; why don't you send for Padre Anzer, and confess your sins to him, and ask him to pray for you that God would forgive you, and drive away those fiends you see near you now; and, perhaps, you would escape hell, after all?" The Mexican rose up, in half sitting posture, leaning on one elbow, while he stared wildly at me for two or three minutes. Then he said, "Why do you talk in that way? You have the American religion, and you do not believe in priests, and yet you tell me to send for Padre Anzer. I see you are amusing yourself with my misery, and you think I am too big a fool to see it." "You are mistaken, hombre. I believe, as all Christians do, no matter what their denomination, that when we know ourselves guilty of great sins, we should ask good, pious persons to pray for us, so that God would be moved by their prayers to give us the grace to repent and sue for his forgiveness. Padre Anzer is a priest of the Church you, as well as myself,

were baptized in; and, if I were in your place, I would send for him, and beg him to pray for me.” As I finished speaking, he dropped his head on the pillow, but so that his face was downward, and covered from sight, while his hands were clasped on his ears. He groaned, as if enduring intense pains and torments of body or mind—or, most likely, both. After a few moments, he raised his head, and again fixed his terrible, wild, bright eyes on my face, and said, in a wild, excited tone, “What a fool I was to listen to you talking of *God* and *His* forgiving me. It only made the fiends mad, and they all showed themselves to me, and I heard an unborn child we murdered cry again. I tried to stop my ears, but it was no use; and the fiend laughed, while I was obliged to listen. Yes; and I saw young Cary's bloody hand just as he always appears to me. No, no; do not speak to me of God. Speak to me of hell. It is there I am going. I am almost there now.” I was filled with horror at this allusion to terrible, inhuman crimes; but somehow I hated to go off and have the wretch die in despair. So I sat perfectly still, undecided what to do, while he lay back on his pillow, with his eyes closed, breathing hard and fast. I watched him, and began to fear that his hour was come, and that his soul was passing away. But it was only one of his spasms. He suddenly opened his eyes, turned, and looked at me with a sort of vacant stare, as if he had just awoke from sleep. “Shall I call the woman?” said I. He did not answer for half a minute, then said: “Well, I see you want to leave me; you are right, you are right, you are right. Fly from me. I am a child of hell. You dare not listen to my history. If you did, you would see that no place but hell is fit for me.” “I do not want to leave you; and I would do anything to help you, if you would listen to me, and do as I advise you. I tell you that you can save yourself from hell even now.” He again arose to a half-sitting posture, and said, as he stretched out his head towards me: “The Americans are a great people—a wise people. Tell me, do you believe what you have just said? Do not deceive a miserable, dying wretch. Do you, in truth, believe what you 44 have just said?” “Of course, I believe it; just as firmly as I believe the sun rose this morning. If I did not, what would be the use of my giving you any advice on the subject?” “Will you listen to my history?” “I would rather not, except there is some object to be gained by my doing so.” “Well, I want just to tell you the worst part of it; and then, if you think there is any possible chance—which I do not—of escaping hell, I will take your advice, and do just as you direct me.” “Well, on that condition, I will listen; but now it is late, and getting dark. I will be here in the morning at 10 o'clock. Will that do?” “Good; I am satisfied, and you shall

judge for yourself.” At the appointed hour, next morning, I was seated by the Mexican's bed. He told the woman to leave, as he had done the previous evening. Then he reached out, and took from the table a bottle of California wine, and, placing it to his lips, drank more than half its contents, at one draught. Laying it down, he commenced the terrible tale of his life, in which it appeared that his name was Nicholas Morano; that he was born in Mazatlan, Mexico, of respectable parents, and was well educated; that he came to California before his majority, and lived as a mercantile clerk in Los Angeles up to the war with the United States. He then joined the California forces, and remained with the army—if army it could be called—until after Stockton and Kearny had taken possession of Los Angeles, the second and last time. He then returned to his old employer, and soon after became devotedly attached to a beautiful young California girl; that, after the wedding day had been appointed his affianced proved faithless to him, flying from her father's house with a young American military officer, who degraded, but did not marry her. Then he detailed how, burning with hate and jealousy, he watched for a chance to revenge himself on the American. At length his opportunity came. He discovered the hiding place of the faithless girl—a little adobe house hid away in an orange grove on the outskirts of the town. Here, with a friend, he lay in wait until, just at night, the unsuspecting American approached. The two men sprang upon him. The American fought like a tiger. The girl rushed, screaming, to his aid, and joined in the fight with the fury of a wildcat. The struggle lasted but two or three minutes. Then Nicholas arose, covered with blood and without a wound worth naming. At his feet lay dead the American, his own friend and the unfortunate girl. He stooped over the form of his affianced, dropped on his knees beside her, raised her head, 45 but all sign of life had fled. Blood was yet flowing from a knife wound in her bosom. He drew from his pocket a white Chinese silk handkerchief, saturated it in the flowing blood, and then, while yet on his knees, he raised it up over her lifeless form, and swore a solemn oath never to make peace with the Americans. Stooping as he spoke the last words of the fearful oath, he kissed the cold white lips of the dead girl. Then he fled from approaching footsteps. He was suspected, and left Los Angeles. In Santa Barbara he found two congenial spirits, who joined him in the oath of war on the Americans, and of fidelity to each other. Nicholas was to be captain of this band, and to him they swore obedience. Soon afterwards, in San Jose, they took two more desperadoes into their confidence. The dying robber now related a series of terrible, treacherous

murders and robberies, in which he had had a hand—sometimes directly, and sometimes indirectly. Above all seemed to stand out in the vision of this dying wretch the murder of two brothers of the name of Cary, and of a man and his wife on the Salinas plains. The Cary brothers were decoyed on the pretence of selling them cattle, to a place south of San Juan—about where the town of Hollister now stands—and there murdered under circumstances of peculiar brutality. Mr. Breen well recollected having seen those two young men in San Juan, as they passed on south, and of advising them to be cautious and look out for treachery. The mystery of their never returning and strange disappearance was revealed to him now, for the first time. The man and wife were murdered on the Salinas plains, near the little lagoons where now stands the thriving town of Salinas. From the robber's account, they were evidently educated people, and of good social position. The wife was young, beautiful, and very near her confinement. There is a general belief among Californians that if a woman so situated is met by the fiercest grizzly bear, he will turn away and leave her unharmed. Be this as it may, her situation made her murder, and her dying agony, inexpressibly horrible. He told how, in San Francisco, he became acquainted with the captain of a band of Sydney robbers, with whom his own band co-operated in many villainous schemes, until they were broken up by the Vigilance Committee. Then he related how his own band were all killed, one after the other, in fights and frays, until finally but one beside himself was left. Then how they two quarreled over money they had robbed from an American, and how, in this affray he had run his knife through his friend on 46 the steps of the “Bella Union,” in San Francisco. How his friend, while dying, screened him from arrest for the act by telling the police who gathered around him that it was an American who struck him the fatal blow; then how his friend whispered in his ear, as he gasped out his last breath: “Thank God, I die by the hand of a countryman.” How, from that hour, ill luck followed him, until disease and sickness bore him down to this horrid death-bed, “where,” he continued, “all the murdered Americans haunt my sight, asleep or awake. I see them all waiting for me; and, above all, one of the Cary boys holding up a cross in his shattered, bloody hand, asking for mercy, just as he was when I struck him the last blow, and then the fearful, mournful cry of the dying mother is always ringing in my ears. It was not I who struck her. I was in a struggle with the husband, and she was striking at me with a hatchet, when my partner stabbed her in the breast. She fell on her face, dead, as we believed; but, just as we were turning away, she stretched out her

hand and, partly raising herself up almost to a kneeling position, she gave the loudest, longest and most fearful cry I ever heard. Oh! it was the cry of the child and mother both. After she had again dropped on the ground, the cry seemed to float away over the valley, and we thought we could hear it echo and re-echo up in the Gabalan mountains. A hundred coyotes, it seemed to me, started into sight from their hiding places, and answered the cry with fearful howling. I have been only twice through the Salinas plains since then; but both times I plainly heard that fearful cry yet re-echoing along the hills.” Then he told how they dragged the bodies of the husband and wife, threw them into an old well near the little lagoon, and filled the well with rubbish to conceal them, and then burned their effects, reserving only their gold and the woman's jewelry. During the recital the wretched man would stop for ten minutes at a time, groaning and apparently in terrible agony, but he always motioned me to remain until he could again command his voice. As he finished he looked at me with a grim smile and said: “Well, you give it up, now; for you see that neither Protestant nor Catholic priest, nor bishop, could save such as me?” As I replied, I tried not to betray the sickening, horrible disgust I could not help feeling towards him. I said: “Both Protestants and Catholics believe that God can send even such as you grace to repent, and that, if you do repent, He will forgive you.” “You say all Christians believe 47 that?” “Yes; most surely they do.” “Then,” said he, in a voice hardly audible, “send me Padre Anzer, and I will get him to take from me that bloody handkerchief, although I know all the fiends will try to prevent him; for it was the sight of that handkerchief that prompted me to my worst deeds.” Glad to escape to the open air, out of the sight of this terrible man, I left, in almost a run; sought out Padre Anzer, who at once responded to the call. I was glad to be rid of the necessity of again seeing the unfortunate wretch. My wife saw to all his personal wants, and for the following three days I observed Padre Anzer passing in and out of the robber's dark room. Then, on the third day, I saw a few Californians bringing out a coffin. I knew it contained the remains of Nicholas, the murderer. I walked to the grave with them but asked no questions, for I already knew too much. As I turned away, I found myself saying: “God's mercies are surely above all his works, so we must not doubt, and if it were not so, who among us all could hope to enter heaven?”

We can hardly realize, in these days of peace and safety for travelers in California, how different it was in the early days of American rule. There is not twenty miles of the traveled road from Monterey to San Francisco that, at some spot, has not been the scene of a foul murder in those eventful times. I could point out the location where at least six murdered men were found at different times, between San Juan and San Jose; and more yet between San Jose and San Francisco. There are four murdered men buried under a tree a little north of the bridge that crossed the San Francisquita creek, or arroyo, near the Menlo Park railroad station. The first buried there was a man of the name of Nightingale, who was in charge of the toll-gate kept on the bridge, which was built for the two counties by Isaac N. Thorn. Nightingale was murdered in a little house he resided in, near the bridge, for his money. Some months later, the bodies of three murdered men were found near the same place, and, unrecognized by any one, were buried under the same tree. Nearly every road in the State has its similar terrible record of murders. For the present, I will leave this disagreeable subject, though there are frightfully thrilling scenes connected with my recollections of those dangerous days to lonely travelers in California, some of which you may find described in another place, should my space permit giving you more of the history of that period.

CHAPTER V.

DISCOVERY OF GOLD BY MARSHALL—UNSUCCESSFUL ENDEAVOR TO KEEP THE MATTER SECRET—LIFE IN CALIFORNIA—INCORRECT ACCOUNT OF IT IN THE “ANNALS”—ALLEGED DISSIPATION OF ALL CLASSES—GENERAL INDULGENCE IN GAMBLING—AMUSEMENTS, ETC.

The next subject treated of in the “Annals” that calls for a notice is the discovery of gold in California, and the consequences of that discovery. The history of the discovery, as given in the “Annals,” is accepted by nearly every one as, in the main, correct. It is as follows. I quote from page 130 of the “Annals”:

“Many strange and improbable stories have been told as to the earliest discoveries; but we believe that the only reliable account is that given by Captain Sutter, upon whose ground the precious

metal was first found, and which we shall therefore adopt, without noticing the various fabulous statements alluded to.

“It appears that Captain Sutter, during the winter of 1847-8, was erecting a saw-mill for producing lumber, on the south fork of the American River, a feeder of the Sacramento. Mr. James W. Marshall contracted with Sutter for the building of this mill; and, in the course of his operations, had occasion to admit the river water into the tail-race, for the purpose of widening and deepening it by the strength of the current. In doing this, a considerable quantity of mud, sand and gravel was carried along with the stream, and deposited in a heap at the foot of the tail-race. Marshall, when one day examining the state of his works, noticed a few glittering particles lying near the edge of the heap. His curiosity being aroused, he gathered some of the sparkling objects, and at once became satisfied of their nature, and the value of his discovery. All trembling with excitement, he hurried to his employer, and told his story. Captain Sutter at first thought it was fiction, and the teller only a fool. Indeed, he confesses that he kept a sharp eye upon his loaded rifle, when he, whom he was tempted to consider a maniac, was eagerly disclosing the miraculous tale. However, his doubts were all at once dispelled when Marshall turned on the table before him an ounce or so of this shining dust. The two agreed to keep the matter secret, and quietly share the golden harvest between them. But, as they afterwards searched more narrowly together, and gloated upon the rich deposits, their eager gestures and looks and muttered broken words happened to be closely watched by a Mormon laborer employed about the neighborhood. He speedily became as 49 wise as themselves. As secrecy was of little importance to him, he forthwith divulged the extraordinary intelligence, and, in confirmation of the story, exhibited some scales of gold he had himself gathered. Immediately, everybody in the neighborhood left his regular employment and began to search for the precious metal.”

Now, while the authors of the “Annals” seek to tell us of the result, or consequence, of the discovery of gold, and of the sort of people it brought to our State, and of the sort of society these people when assembled together produced in San Francisco, they grow perfectly wild, reckless and extravagant, and in many instances wholly misrepresented the facts. This is an interesting subject to our young readers, for it is of their fathers and mothers this part of the “Annals” treats. I

think, before I get through, I will satisfy every one of them that the picture drawn of us '49ers in the “Annals,” is a base caricature, and a vile slander on the pioneers. From the picture, as given in the “Annals,” you gather—

First. That it was the wild, worthless, reckless and smart, clever rascals, as they call us, of all nations that rushed to California on the discovery of gold.

Second. That scarce one virtuous woman came with that rush.

Third. That it was unsafe for a virtuous woman to live in San Francisco.

Fourth. That there was no such thing as a family circle in California in the years '49, '50 or '51, and hardly any worth the mentioning in '52 or '53.

Fifth. That *every one*, Americans and all, on arriving here, threw off *all restraint* of religion, of education and of home, American training, and rushed headlong into all manner of vices and excesses.

Sixth. That all, “from the minister of religion to the boot-black,” gambled, drank and took part openly in every excess. That for the first four years after the gold discovery, including 1852, *all*, with hardly one exception, joined in one general debauch, openly attending, without an attempt at concealment, lewd fancy balls and entertainments given by *invitation* in houses of ill-fame.

The authors, in solemn earnestness, claim it as a *virtue*, and the only redeeming one of our people of San Francisco, that they were not hypocrites, as the peoples of other countries, they assert, are, because we openly and without shame acknowledged 50 that we were indulging in every devilish excess that money could procure. Yes; and that “even the family man loved San Francisco with her brave wickedness and splendid folly.” As if wickedness could be brave, or folly splendid. The one, in truth, belongs to the cowardly sneak, and the other to the contemptible fool.

The “Annals” try to make this picture they draw of a four years' debauch in San Francisco look full of wild, charming delights, and they grow perfectly enthusiastic over it, as they exclaim:

“Happy the man who can look back to his share in these scenes of excesses. He will be an oracle to admiring neighbors.”

Read the following quotations from the “Annals,” and judge if I misstate the position of the authors as to our moral status in the pioneer years of '49, '50, '51, '52, '53 and '54. Read the quotations from pages 364, 365 and 423 of the “Annals,” and it will be seen that they are unwilling to admit of any change for the better as to private morals. I have examined the book carefully, and I fail to find, from cover to cover, one unqualified admission that there were *any* virtuous women or good, industrious wives in San Francisco in those years, or one man worthy of a virtuous wife in all that time. On pages 134 and 135 they say:

“These astonishing circumstances soon gathered into California (in 1849) a mixed population of nearly a quarter of a million of the wildest, bravest, most intelligent, yet most reckless and perhaps dangerous beings ever before collected into one small district of country. Gold, and the pleasures that gold could bring, had allured them to the scene.****Rich or poor, fortunate or the reverse, in their search for gold, they were almost equally dangerous members of the community.****The gaming table, women and drink were certain to produce a prolific crop of vice, crime and all social disorders.****A legal Constitution could alone save California.****Probably Congress at a distance was not sufficiently alive to the present need of adequate measures being instantly taken to remedy the alarming state of things described.****At any rate, the most honest, intelligent and influential persons of California believed that they could wait no longer.”

From pages 216 and 217:

“Gambling saloons glittered like fairy palaces—like them, suddenly sprung into existence, studding nearly all sides of the Plaza and every street in its neighborhood. As if intoxicating drinks from the well plenished and splendid bar they contained were insufficient to gild the same, music added its loudest, if not its sweetest charms, and all was mad, feverish mirth, where 51 fortunes were lost and won upon the green cloth in the twinkling of an eye. *All classes gambled in those days, from the starched white neck-clothed professor of religion to the veriest black rascal that earned a dollar*

from blackening massa's boots. Nobody had leisure to think even for a moment of his occupation, and how it was viewed in Christian lands. The heated brain was never allowed to get cool while a bit of coin or dust was left. These saloons, therefore, were crowded night and day by the impatient revelers, who never could satiate themselves with excitement, nor get rid too soon of their golden heaps.***The very thought of that wondrous time is an electric spark that fires into one great flame all our fancies, passions and experiences of the fall and of the eventful year 1849.”

“The remembrance of those days comes across us like the delirium of fever; we are caught by it before we are aware.”****

“Happy the man who can tell of these things which he saw, and, perhaps, himself did, at San Francisco at that time. He shall be an oracle to admiring neighbors.”

Speaking of the close of 1849, they say on page 244:

“There was no such thing as a *home* to be found, scarcely even a *proper house* could be seen.”

On pages 248, 249 and 250, they tell us:

“Such places were accordingly crowded with a motley crew, who drank, swore and gamed to their hearts' content. *Everybody did so*; and that circumstance was a sufficient excuse, *if one were needed*, to the neophyte in debauchery. To vary amusements, occasionally a fancy dress ball, or masquerade, would be announced at a high price. There the most extraordinary scenes were exhibited, as might have been expected where the actors and dancers were chiefly hot-headed young men, flush of money and half frantic with excitement and lewd girls, freed from the necessity of all moral restraint.”***“Monté, faro, roulette, rondo, rouge-et-noir and vingt-un, were the games chiefly played. In the larger saloons, beautiful and well dressed women dealt out the cards, or turned the roulette wheel, while lascivious pictures hung on the walls. A band of music and numberless blazing lamps gave animation and a feeling of joyous rapture to the scene.”

“Gaming became a regular business, and those who followed it professionally were *really among the richest, most talented and influential citizens* of the town.”****“The sight of such treasures, the occasional success of players, the music, the bustle, heat, drink, greed and deviltry, all combined to encourage play to an extent limited only by the great wealth of the community. *Judges and clergymen, physicians and advocates, merchants and clerks, contractors, shopkeepers, tradesmen, mechanics, and laborers, miners and farmers, all* adventurers in their kind— *every one* elbowed his way to the gaming table, and unblushingly threw down his gold or silver stake.”

An admission on page 251, which is worse than no admission:

“There were exceptions, indeed, and some men scorned to enter a 52 gambling saloon, or touch a card, but these were *too few comparatively to be specially noticed.*”

On page 300, of the year 1850, they say:

“Perhaps two thousand females, many of whom were of base character, and loose practices, were also added this year to the permanent population.”

On page 357 (in 1851):

“Females were very few in proportion to the whole number of inhabitants, although they were beginning to increase more rapidly. *A very large* portion of the female population *continued* to be of a loose character.”

Pages 364-65:

“Balls and convivial parties of the most brilliant character were constantly taking place. The great number of flourishing women of pleasure, particularly French, mightily encouraged this universal holiday, and gave ease, taste and *sprightly elegance* to the manners of the town.”*****“ *It would be hard indeed* for its hot-blooded and venturesome population if they did not make the treasures within their grasp minister to every enjoyment that youth and sanguine constitutions could crave.”

“During the disturbed times in the early part of 1851, when nobody was safe from the assaults of desperadoes, even in the public streets or in his own dwelling, the practice of wearing deadly weapons became still more common. These were often used, though not so much against the robber and assassin as upon the old friend or acquaintance or the stranger, when drink and scandal, time and circumstances had converted them into supposed enemies.”

“The general population of San Francisco in 1852, with shame it must be confessed, in those days—as is STILL the case in 1854, to a considerable extent—drank largely of intoxicating liquors. A great many tiptoed at times, and quite as many swore lustily. They are an adventurous people, and their enjoyments are all of an exciting kind. They are bold and reckless, from the style of the place and the nature both of business and amusement. *New-comers fall naturally into the same character.*”

Page 368, of the year 1851:

“Balls, masquerades and concerts, gambling saloons, visits to frail women—who have always been very numerous and gay in San Francisco—and an occasional lecture, filled up the measure of evening amusement.**It may be said, at the same time, that the foreign population were generally an orderly, obedient and useful class of the community. The Chinese might have, perhaps, proved an exception.”

Of the close of the year 1852, page 399, they say:

“There is a sad recklessness of conduct and carelessness of life among the people of California, and *nearly all* the inhabitants of San Francisco, whatever be their native country, or their original pacific disposition, share in the same hasty, wild character and feeling.”

A flattering mention of women, on page 417:

“Stylishly dressed and often lovely women were constantly seen in fine weather, promenading the principal streets and idling their time (which they knew not how otherwise to ‘kill’) and spending somebody's money in foolish shopping, just as is the custom with the most virtuous dames in the great cities on both sides of the Atlantic.”

Of 1852 they tell us on pages 423-24-25:

“No important change had occurred in the *social or moral condition* of San Francisco during 1852, and the characteristics of the people which were noticed in our review of the previous year *still existed*. The old dizzy round of business and pleasure continued. There were not only more people, greater wealth, finer houses, more shops and stores, more work, trade and profits, more places of dissipation and amusement, more tippling and swearing, more drunkenness and personal outrages, nearly as much public gambling and more private play. There were also a *few* more modest women, and *many more* of another class.*****Then there were more churches, more moral lectures and religious publications, more Sabbath and day schools, and, too, more of everything that was beautiful and bad. More *vice, debauchery* and *folly*, and, perhaps, also *a little* more real religion, and sometimes a *deal of outward decency*.***The majority, however, of the first settlers had faith in the place. They relished its excitements as well of business as of pleasure; they had no family or fond ties elsewhere, or these had been *long rudely broken*, and so they adhered to San Francisco.”*****

“A few years here make one old in sensation, thought and experience—changes his sentiments, and he begins to like the town and people for their own sake. The *vices* and *follies*, the general mode of living that frightened and shocked him at first, seem natural to the climate, and after all *are by no means so* VERY DISAGREEABLE.***The scum and froth of its strange mixture of peoples, of *its many scoundrels, rowdies* and great men, *loose women, sharpers* and *few* honest folk, are still all that is visible. The current of its daily life is muddy and defiled by the wild effervescence of these unruly spirits.”

Page 452 (in 1853):

“A great portion of the community still gamble—the lower classes in public, and the upper, or richer, classes in private.”

Pages 500 and 501:

“As we have said, during 1853 most of the moral, intelligent and social characteristics of the inhabitants of San Francisco were nearly as described in the reviews of previous years.***The old hard labor and wild delights, jobberies, official and political corruption, thefts, robberies and violent assaults, murders, duels and suicides, gambling, drinking and general extravagance and dissipation.***They had wealth at command, and all the passions of youth were burning within them. They often, therefore, outraged public decency; yet, somehow, the oldest residents and the very family men loved the place, with all its *brave wickedness and splendid folly*.”

54

Page 502 (in 1854):

“The cards are often still dealt out and the wheels turned, or dice thrown, by beautiful women, well skilled in the arts calculated to allure, betray and ruin the unfortunate men who become their too willing victims.***The keepers are wealthy men, and move in the better social circles of the town.”

Now let us hear the authors ventilate their ideas of morality on this same page and the next, 503:

“Though there be much vice in San Francisco, one virtue—though perhaps a negative one—the citizens at least have; they are not hypocrites, who pretend to high qualities which they do not possess. In great cities of the old world, or it may be even in those of the pseudo-righteous New England States, there may be quite as much crime and vice committed as in San Francisco, only the customs of the former places throw a decent shade over the grosser, viler aspects. The criminal, the fool and the voluptuary are not allowed to boast, directly or indirectly, of their bad, base or foolish deeds, as is so often done in California. Yet these deeds are none the less blamable on that account; nor, perhaps, are our citizens to be more to blame because they often seek not to disguise their faults. Many things that are considered morally and socially wrong by others at a distance

are not so viewed by San Franciscans when done among themselves.***And if San Franciscans conscientiously think that their wild and pleasant life is not so *very, very* wrong, neither *is it so really and truly wrong* as the Puritanic and affectedly virtuous people of Maine-liquor prohibition and of foreign lands would *fain* believe.*** It is difficult for *any woman*, however *pure*, to preserve an unblemished reputation in a community like San Francisco.”

The authors grow enthusiastic over the picture of our wickedness they have drawn, and on pages 508 and 509 they hold forth thus:

“The crime, violence, vice, folly, brutal desires and ruinous habits—the general hell (not to talk profanely) of the place and people—these things, and many of a like saddening or triumphant nature, filled the mind of the moralizing ‘forty-niner.’ If these pioneers—and like them every later adventurer to California, may think and feel, for all have contributed something to the work—lent themselves to the enthusiasm and fancy of the moment, they might be tempted with the Eastern King to proudly exclaim, and as truly: ‘*Is not this* great Babylon that I have built, for the house of the Kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty.’***The vagabonds and scoundrels of foreign lands, and those, too, of the Federal Union, were loosed upon the city. Robbers, incendiaries and murderers, political plunderers, faithless ‘fathers’ and officials, lawless squatters, daring and organized criminals of every description, all the worst moral enemies of other societies concentrating here.”

55

Now the authors, in their enthusiasm, draw fancy scenes to astonish their readers. I quote from pages 665-6-7-8-9:

“Perhaps never in this world's history has there been exhibited such a variety and mixture of life scenes within the same extent and among an equal number of people, as in San Francisco for the two or three years succeeding the discovery of gold.”*****“Away from Law, away from public opinion, away from the restraints of home, half wild with the possession of sudden and unaccustomed wealth, ‘on with the dance, let joy be unconfined’ seemed the motto best suited

to the conduct of a large portion of the people. The Puritan became a gambler; the boy taught to consider dancing a sin soon found his way to masked-balls; *monte* became as familiar as the communion, and the catechism was forgotten while the champagne popped, sparkled and excited. At first it was a society composed almost exclusively of males; and, as a natural and inevitable consequence, men deteriorated. Excitement was sought in such sources as could be found. The gaming-table, with its cards and dice; the bar, with its brandy-smashes and intoxication.”****“But soon women began to join the anomalous crowd. Then a new pleasure of society appeared. Then reason tottered and passion ran riot. The allurements of the cyprian contested the scepter with the faro banks. Champagne at ten dollars a bottle sold as readily in certain localities, as did brandy at fifty-cents a glass in the saloon. Men suddenly rich squandered more in a night than until within a few months they had been able to earn or to possess in years. Dust was plentier than pleasure; pleasure more enticing than virtue; fortune was the horse, youth in the saddle; dissipation the track, and desire the spur. Let none wonder that the time was the best ever made. Naturally enough, masked-balls soon came in the train of women, wine and gold. Many of these ball-rooms were soon dedicated to the service of Terpsichore, Cupid and Momus; and it must be confessed also that Bacchus shared no trifling portion in those devotions. Imagine a vast hall, nearly one hundred feet square, with a bar of fifty feet in length, built with an eye to tasteful architecture, and with a hand in the pocket, glittering in front with gold leaf and in the rear supported by a battalion of cut-glass decanters, colored glass ornamental articles, a golden eagle perched above the stock of liquors and wines—the American cannot drink a cock-tail comfortably unless the ‘star spangled banner’ float above, and the national eagle look with at least a glass eye into his potation; in the center a piece of machinery, exhibiting the sea in motion, tossing a laboring ship upon its bosom; a water-mill in action; a train of cars passing a bridge; and a deerchase, hounds horsemen and game, all in pursuit, or flight. Opposite, a full band, crowding every nook of the room with sweet echoes, marches, cotillions, mazurkas, gallopades, waltzes. On the third side a cake and a coffee-stand; and behind it a fair face, limber tongue, busy hands, coining dust from thirst, gallantry and dissipation.”

“It is dark, the hour nine; the rain dripples outside and the quaker-grey outdoors, wet, chill, mud, gloom of the rainy season, drive the lonesome, the hilarious and the dissipated to the door where

the ticket-taker admits the pleasure-seeker, who has deposited his umbrella in the general depot for 56 those movable roofs, and been relieved by a policeman of any dangerous weapon—silver and gold excepted—which may accompany his person. By the private entrance come the maskers, male and female. The Spanish bandit with his high tapering hat ornamented with ribbons; the Gipsy with her basket and cards; the Bloomer, beautiful in short skirts and satin-covered extremities; the ardent young militaire with a borrowed uniform and sparse moustache; which requires like swarming bees the assistance of a clattering tin kettle to congregate the scattering portions; the Swiss ballad-singers, with their hurdy-gurdy and tambourine; the flaunting cyprian, not veiled by domino or mask; and the curious, but *respectable* lady, hidden by cloak and false visage. There is the Frenchman, in fantastical dress; a Gallic Count imitating the Yankee; the Yankee affecting ‘Auntie Vermont;’ and men, already feeling the force of their libations, affecting sobriety.”

“Now the band commences, the bow is drawn, the breath blown, and domino and mask are whisked about into the midst of the dizzy maze by the Turk, who has forgotten his cimeter; the Pole, who has nothing of Kosciusko or Poniatowski except the tall cap, etc.; the Vermonter imitating a courtier of Charles II, and a Red Republican affecting Silsbe or Dan Marble. Away they whirl through the waltz, or crash along the mazurka or dash away promiscuously in the gallopade. Where there are no masks exercise brings no new rose tint nor crimson to the soft cheek—the rouge or carmine is too thick for that. The music draws to a close, and ends with a grand flourish. Off to the bar and coffee-stand go the maskers, the gentlemen to treat, the others to be treated. So a few hours wear away. The potations begin to operate, the violent seek rencontres, old scores are to be settled and new quarrels commenced. Jealousy's eyes take a greener tinge from the bottle imp, and woman, forgetting her last prerogative, gentleness, joins the ring and gives point and effect to feminine oaths, by the use of feminine nails. Gradually the room is thinned, the first departing being careful to select the finest umbrellas, and when daylight comes it finds the usual characteristics of such ‘banquet hall deserted.’ Such is a slight description of the ‘California Exchange’ in the height of its ball-day glories, where in one night thousands of dollars were taken for tickets, and thousands at the bar for drinks. Another scene. See yonder house. Its curtains are of the purest white lace embroidered, and crimson damask. Go in. All the fixtures are of a keeping most expensive, most

voluptuous, most gorgeous, the favorite ones with the same class of humanity, whose dress and decorations have made so significant, ever since the name of their city and trade 'Babylon.' It is a soiree night. The 'lady' of the establishment has sent most polite invitations, got up on the finest and most beautiful embossed note paper to all the principal gentlemen of the city, including *collector of the port, mayor, aldermen, judges of the county* and members of the legislature. A splendid band of music is in attendance. Away over the Turkey or Brussels carpet whirls the politician with some sparkling beauty, as fair as frail, and the judge joins in and enjoys the dance in company with the beautiful but lost beings whom to-morrow he may send to the house of correction. Everything is conducted with the utmost propriety. Not an unbecoming word is heard. Not 57 an objectionable action seen. The girls are on their good behavior, and are proud to move and act and appear as ladies. Did you not know you would not suspect that you were in one of those dreadful places so vividly described by Solomon, and were it not for the great proportion of beauty present, you might suppose yourself in a *salon* of upper-tendom. But the dance is over; now for the supper table. Everything within the bounds of the market and the skill of the cook and confectioner is before you. Opposite, and by your side, that which nor cook nor confectioner's skill have made what they are—cheeks where the ravages of dissipation have been skillfully hidden, and eyes with pristine brilliancy undimmed, or even heightened by the spirit of the recent champagne; and here the illusion fades. The champagne alone is paid for. The soiree has cost the mistress one thousand dollars, and at the supper and during the night she sells twelve dozen of champagne at ten dollars a bottle! This is a literal fact, not an idea being a draft upon the imagination or decorated with the colors of fancy. *No loafers present* but the male *ton*; vice hides herself for the occasion, and staid dignity bends from its position to *twine a few* flowers of social pleasure around the heads and breasts of these poor outcasts of society."

Page 670. The man all right, the woman a hypocrite:

"Another picture. It is Sunday afternoon. Service is over at church and 'meeting house.' The Christian who went to worship, and the belle *whose desire was to excite admiration*, have returned home. The one to *reflect or to read*, the other to *calculate possible triumphs or to coquette*."

On page 727 we find this foolish misrepresentation:

“Owing to his removal from office, and the impossibility of deciding upon his future course, but *chiefly because of the disordered state of the city, occasioned by the outrages of the ‘Hounds,’* rendering it actually unsafe for any lady to reside there, Colonel Geary determined to let his family remain here no longer, but sent back to Pennsylvania, in company with long tried friends, his wife and two babes, the youngest of whom had been born in April, and was the first male child, of purely American parents, that was born in San Francisco after the cession of California to the United States.”

In puffing John W. Geary, on page 719, the authors utter the following malicious, wholesale slander of the Pioneers:

“Who, then, would have expected to have found a community so lawless and reckless, so passion-actuated and fancy-governed, so wild, desperate and daring, *so pregnant with vices* and so *barren of virtues*, as it [San Francisco] was described in the history of nations, the first to exhibit to centuries of civilized life a lesson of thankfulness for good done, of forbearance and sacrifice of personal desires, of zeal and earnestness in rewarding real merit?”

Now, I take issue with the authors' of the “Annals,” and make the following statement, which I will undertake to sustain, in 58 part, by some facts given in the “Annals” itself, and, in part from other sources; and my readers shall be the judges of the probable correctness of my position. In the first place, then, I assert, that after the first day of May, 1849, nineteen-twentieths of the emigration to this State came from the other States of the American Union. Secondly, that this whole emigration, with a few exceptions, of course, were remarkable for their high moral and social standing at home, as well as for their education, intelligence, energy and personal bravery. Thirdly, that fourfifths of them *never faltered*, in their new home, from this high character and standing. Fourthly, that a large number of women and children poured into the State with the American immigration, and that of all these women in San Francisco, and in the whole State, not so large a proportion as one in twenty belonged, openly or privately, to the abandoned class, which was the only one known,

it should seem, to the authors of the “Annals.” Fifthly, that in the early Summer months of 1849, family homes began to appear in every direction in San Francisco, and that by the Fall of '49, they could be said to be numerous; and that from that time forward they steadily increased; that in the Fall of 1850, nice family houses and cottages, were a leading feature of the city; that, in '51 and '52, the want of families and of home family circles was hardly felt—except, of course, by the new comers; that not so large a proportion as one-fifth of the residents of San Francisco joined in the gambling carousals described in the “Annals,” or in fact, gambled in any way; that there never was such a ball at a house of ill-fame, as described in the “Annals” on page 665, which they accompany with a wood cut to make it look charming; that there were balls at such houses no one doubts, but that respectable men in San Francisco ever openly attended such is untrue; that it never was so that keepers and managers of gambling hells were of the “first respectability and social standing” in San Francisco, as is claimed by the “Annals;” that no one in San Francisco ever saw a minister of religion, of any denomination, who was in good standing with his church, at a gambling table; that there never was a day in San Francisco when every man, or even one man of respectable standing was willing to say *openly* that he went to such carousals as are described on page 665 of the “Annals.” Now, my young Forty-niners, to whom I am addressing myself, let me see how far I can sustain these bold, flat denials and charges of 59 misrepresentation on the authors of the “Annals.” I will draw your attention, in the first place, to a few queer facts we find in the “Annals” themselves, and see if they look consistent with the charming picture of “brave wickedness and splendid folly” they draw of us old Forty-niners. Examine the following quotations from the “Annals”:

On page 295 we find the following, in relation to the celebration of October 29, 1850:

“The houses were likewise brilliantly illuminated and the rejoicings were everywhere loudly continued during the night. Some five hundred gentlemen and *three hundred ladies* met at the grandest public ball that had ever yet been witnessed in the city, and danced and made merry till daylight, in the pride and joy of their hearts that California was truly now the THIRTY-FIRST State in the Union.”

Page 361:

“Schools and churches were springing up on all sides. A certain class largely patronized the last, though it must be admitted that very many, particularly foreigners, never entered them.”

Page 447. 1853:

“MAY 2d—May-day happening upon Sunday, a procession of school children to celebrate the occasion, took place the next day. This was a new and pleasant sight in San Francisco, and the event is worthy of being recorded. There were about a thousand children of both sexes in the train. They appeared all in holiday costume, the girls being dressed in white. Each one carried a bouquet of fresh and beautiful flowers. There was the usual ‘Queen of May,’ with the ‘Maids of Honor,’ and various other characters, all represented by the juvenile players. The children of seven schools bore distinctive banners. A fine band of music accompanied the happy procession. After proceeding through the principal thoroughfares, the children moved to the schoolhouse on Broadway. Here some pleasant ceremonies, songs, and addresses took place, in which the children themselves were the chief actors. A repast of such delicate eatables as suited youthful palates was next enjoyed, after which the glad multitude dispersed.”

Page 492. 1853:

“There are 10 public schools, with 21 teachers, and 1,250 scholars, besides private establishments. There are 18 churches, and about 8,000 church members.”

Divorce. Page 503:

“By the laws of California, divorces are readily obtained by both husband and wife, one of whom may think him or herself injured by the cruel conduct of the other, and who, perhaps, disliking his or her mate, or loving another 60 may wish to break the bonds of wedlock. Divorces are accordingly growing very numerous here, and have helped to raise a general calumny against the sex.”

Pages 663-4:

“In 1851 a company of *model artists* exhibited at the Parker House with very poor success; and even Dr. Collyer's company, who opened rooms on a greater scale on Commercial street, received no better patronage—showing that the public taste was not so vitiated as was supposed.”***“A large Music Hall has been erected on Bush street, near the corner of Montgomery, by Mr. Henry Meiggs, and here quiet folks are entertained with concerts, oratorios, lectures, fairs and the like. The ‘Mercantile Library Company,’ ‘Young Men's Christian Association,’ and other societies, at various seasons every year, afford the literary public opportunities of listening to scientific, moral, and other instructive discourses by eminent speakers.

“*Thus do the people of San Francisco employ their leisure hours.* Possessed of so many opportunities of gaining wealth, they freely use it in the purchase of those enjoyments which relieve their minds and bodies from the harassing toil to which they have been subjected in its acquirement. Thus, notwithstanding the immense wear and tear of such unexampled energy as is here required in any occupation, the unstinted and universal use of reasonable relaxation and pleasure enables them to retain their vigor, and lead far more agreeable and useful lives than do the miserable hoarders of slowlygotten gains in other countries.”

Page 685:

“The aggregate number of schools in this city is now 34, the whole number of teachers 62—20 being males and 42 females, and the whole number of scholars 1,305 boys, and 1,216 girls—or, in all, 2,521, about seventy per cent of all the children over four years of age in the place. In five of these schools, the ancient and modern languages, higher mathematics, philosophy, etc., are taught.”

Churches and Religion. Page 687:

“We have gazed so long on the moral turpitude of the San Franciscans, that both eye and mind would turn away pained if they could dwell on more pleasant sights.***Happily the long record of vice and immorality (the black page of our diary) has a bright and noble counterpart, like the

gold-dust amid the muddy atoms of our own river-beds, that redeems our character from wholesale condemnation.”

Pages 699 and 700:

“Such an array of churches and societies are surely evidences enough of the sincerity, zeal and success of the early spirit of moral reform. It has also established numerous benevolent institutions, and sought to excite sympathy and gratitude, by alleviating sorrow and softening the harsh blows of misfortune.*** We have already spoken of the public school effort, 61 and the good accomplished through it, and we may remark now that it has been ably seconded by the establishment, in almost all the churches, of Sabbath-schools and Bible-classes, which are *extremely well attended*.”

Page 701:

“We have said enough, we hope, to prove that not all, nor near all, the citizens of San Francisco are lost to everything but reckless dissipation. No city of equal size—*few of ten times its age*—can present such a list of *men* and *institutions* who have accomplished so much REAL good with so little cant and hypocrisy.”

On page 176 of the “Annals” we find that in June, 1847, some time before gold was discovered, not counting the New York volunteers, there were 375 white inhabitants in San Francisco; 107 of these were children, of both sexes, and 77 were women, and 228 of the whole number were born in the United States. This shows that we did not start with much when gold was discovered. Now read the quotation from page 295 of the “Annals,” and what do we find on the twenty-ninth day of October, 1850, a little over a year after the American immigration began. We find 300 highly respectable ladies attending a ball given in honor of the admission of California into the Union. I was at that ball, and I knew personally every lady in attendance on that happy occasion, and there was not one exceptionable female there. They were the wives and daughters of our first citizens. Pretty good, you will admit, for a city where no virtuous women could live, if we were to credit the “Annals.”

In the next place, read the quotation from page 447. Here we find 1,000 well dressed, well cared for, beautiful children on parade, representing at least three times that number not on parade. This proves that on the second day of May, 1853, there must have been at least *four thousand children* in San Francisco. Did the mothers of these 4,000 children arrive here the day before the parade, or had they mothers? The children were beautifully dressed. Can it be that they came from the haunts of the vile and the wicked, as the “Annals” would have us believe? My young reader, these children had mothers; good, virtuous, and as true women as ever adorned a community. They were your mothers, the women of '49—'50—'51—the existence of whom the authors of the “Annals” ignore throughout their whole book. On pages 300 and 357, and in every paragraph relating to women, they wickedly misrepresent the character of the female immigration to our State. I well recollect that, on the 62 occasion of that parade of children, I stood on Montgomery street with a respected friend, now past to his last resting place in Lone Mountain. As the procession passed us, my friend, clasping his hands enthusiastically, exclaimed: “Well, well! God bless the women of '49! They have done more for our State than all the men on earth.” Next let me ask you to read the quotations from pages 492 and 493. What do you think? Does it not show pretty well for a place the authors of the “Annals” tell us was steeped to the chin in a universal debauch? In 1847 we started, as I have already drawn your attention to, with 375 white inhabitants, and 107 of these were children. In three years from that date the “Annals” are forced to admit the existence of *ten* public schools, conducted by 21 teachers, with *one thousand two hundred and fifty children* in daily attendance; 18 churches, with *eight thousand* church members. Who were these church members? To take a rule that almost universally applies to the sex of church members, say three women to one man, it will give us 6,000 female church members and 2,000 male church members. How is this? The “Annals” tell us that no virtuous women could live in San Francisco at that time. The “Annals” further tell us that, besides the *one thousand two hundred and fifty children* at the public schools, there were a great number attending “private educational establishments.” Pretty good, I say, for a three-year-old, debauched city, where “*all gamble and drink*,” and where the most respectable attend balls at houses of ill-fame by invitation, without any concealment, as the “Annals” tell us. But we have more wonders to draw attention to that this “brave, wicked” people did. Read quotation from page 685. You see that, in 1854, the most depressed year San Francisco ever went through, the schools numbered 34,

the teachers 62, the children in actual attendance two thousand five hundred and twelve, which was seventy per cent. of the children over four years of age in the whole city. By adding the thirty per cent. *not in attendance* on the schools, and the children under four years of age, it will give us about 5,000 children for San Francisco at that date. Pretty fair, you will admit, for a city whose women are “flaunting, idle, worthless creatures.” Yes; pretty fair for a city that has no mothers, no home family circles, if we are to believe the authors of the “Annals.” Now I will draw your attention to the quotation from page 663, and ask this question: If San Francisco was such a 63 terribly wicked place as the “Annals” describe it, why did not this shameless exhibition of De Collyer’s prove a success? Now read the quotation from page 664, and do you not find it a complete contradiction to nearly the whole of what the “Annals” have before told us, as to the habits and ways of our pioneers? Now read the quotation from page 687, on character and religion. It is a preface to a long account of the churches and the wonderful activity in religious matters in San Francisco. This history of religious matters was furnished to the authors of the “Annals” by the clergymen of the various denominations, and could not, with decency, be omitted; so they insert it, but make an ingenious effort to induce us to believe that this splendid array of personal sacrifices for the sake of society, with its wonderful success, in some way, was consistent with the sink of immorality they describe the whole people of San Francisco to be sunk in. “Without an exception worth noticing,” as we are told on pages 216, 250 and 251. What an absurdity! San Francisco commenced her career with 375 white inhabitants—not a school or a church within her limits. This was a year before the gold discovery. In four short years after the discovery of gold the “Annals” record that she has 24 places of public worship, many of them beautiful buildings, with at least 12,000 church members, 9,000 of whom were undoubtedly women. Pretty good for a city a virtuous woman could not live in and preserve unsullied her reputation, for so the “Annals” tell us. They record, further, that there are now 34 public schools, with 25,000 children in daily attendance, and 2,500 children not attending the public schools; two well conducted and flourishing orphan asylums, with many charitable and benevolent associations, to which belong hundreds of zealous members. Yes; and they tell us of public libraries, lecture rooms, and, in fact, a fine beginning in all that should belong to a refined Christian community. Is such a state of facts possible, if what the “Annals” tell us of the people of San Francisco from 1849 to '54 be true? As to the women of those four years, if we were to believe

the “Annals,” they were “nearly all worthless, abandoned, idle creatures.” I have quoted the only sentence, from cover to cover, in the “Annals,” where the authors utter a word in regard to women, that would qualify their wholesale denunciation of them, and that is an unwilling admission, that there were, or *might be*, some virtuous women in San Francisco; but they were the exception. 64 On page 300 we are told that of 2,000 women they report as arriving that year, “*many* of them were of the abandoned sort,” and from the way it is stated, the impression is given that *most* of them were of that class, whereas, in truth, not over three in a hundred of them were of that class, and this is a large estimate. Again, on page 357, we are told that the women were increasing very fast, but that “*a very large proportion of them continue to be of the worst class.*” This is another wicked misrepresentation. Read the quotation from page 417. What a false idea it conveys of the women of '49! For, my young readers, there never was in the annals of the world a nobler class of women than the women of '49. They were patient, they were enduring. They accepted terrible privations, and faced dangers and trials without a murmur. Many and many a time in those days, when the proud, strong man faltered at the difficulties before him, did the wife, the daughter, or the sister, with her cheerful, encouraging voice, and bright, sunny smiles, dispel the dark shadows, and show him the way to success. When I speak of the “women of '49,” of course I do not speak of the poor, abandoned creatures who so filled the imaginations of the authors of the “Annals.” No; I do not speak of them, or think of them; for, though numerous, and particularly so in the eyes of those who chose to live in friendship with them, they were as *nothing* in numbers when compared to the whole female population of San Francisco. No; when I speak of the women of '49, I speak of the wives, daughters and sisters of the men of '49, who, with heroic courage and undaunted resolution, faced a pioneer life, asking nothing but to share our hardships or our triumphs—whatever fortune might throw in our way. No; I speak of your mothers, who brought with them to San Francisco, or had born to them there, the 5,000 children we find there at the close of 1853. I speak of the women who fostered and guarded those children in all that difficult time. I speak of the women whose devotion, unobtrusive piety, good example, and constant whisperings of encouragement and good counsel to the worldly-minded men of their households, were the chief cause of churches, schools, orphan asylums, and many other useful and benevolent associations, springing like magic into existence in every part of the city. Read the quotation from page 423: “*A few more modest women*

and *many more* of another class.” According to these authors, we were growing worse instead of better, notwithstanding 65 our display of churches, schools, and all. Read the quotation from pages 502—3. It gives us some wise, moral teaching. The authors say, in plain English, that all this vile life they describe is not “*really and truly*” wrong, after all; and that an open boast of leading such a life is commendable and a virtue. The authors evidently do not believe in the scriptural passage that says, “Scandal must needs be but woe to him by whom it cometh.” Then they admit—but very unwillingly—that there are some virtuous women in San Francisco, fit companions for the dear, innocent, virtuous creatures *they describe* us men of San Francisco to be at that time. Truly, my young forty-niners, you ought to be grateful to these authors for this admission; for it makes it just possible that some of your mothers were *more* than fit companions for the sort of men only known to the authors of the “Annals” as existing in San Francisco. But they qualify this reluctant admission in so many ways that the uninformed reader conceives from it a yet worse idea of the women of '49 than he had before. Read the quotation from page 670, and you will find another contemptible fling at the women of '49. The authors give the women a base motive for attending church. To the *men a good one!!!* Can it be, my young readers, that these authors had a mother, or a sister? They write as if they never knew of either, although they could not have got into the world without a mother, or lived through their childhood without a woman's unselfish, tender care. Now, let me draw attention to a quotation taken from page 700. It comes in after the authors *find* themselves compelled to give a record of the brilliant triumphs of religion and of learning in the first four years of San Francisco's existence as an American city. You will find in this quotation a sort of an unwilling admission of what we had done, but not a word that takes back their former wholesale slanders of both men and women. They see the absurd position they have placed themselves in, and, with impudence that is refreshing from its coolness, tell us that “not *all* or *near all*” the people of San Francisco were debased outcasts. Truly we should be thankful for this admission. The authors of the “Annals” are as inconsistent on this whole subject of society in San Francisco, in their views and the *facts given*, as they were in the first part of their book on the Missions. Who can read of what the young city of San Francisco accomplished for religion and education, in four short years, and not be filled 66 with enthusiastic admiration? Yet the authors of the “Annals” describe this whole people as being little less than denizens, en masse, of houses of ill-fame, and gambling hells, conducted, they tell

us on pages 249 and 250, by the “richest, most talented and most influential citizens of the city.” I challenge the authors, or any one, to *name* the conductor of a gambling hell, in 1849, or in any other year, who could be said to be one of the “most talented, most influential citizens of the town.” The assertion is utterly without foundation in fact, as every '49er knows. I will say here that I quote what the authors of the “Annals” say of our divorce laws, on page 503—not to condemn it, but to hold up both hands in approval.

The law, as it stands, is nothing less than infamous. It lets the guilty party contract another marriage as well as the aggrieved party. This is not so in New York or Pennsylvania, nor is it so in most of the older States of the Union. Their laws only permit the aggrieved party to again marry. Our law opens the door to terrible domestic wickedness, and strikes at the very foundation of society. The shameful fruits are to be seen all over our State, in wives and husbands dishonored and disgraced, and poor children homeless, and many of them on the road to our State Prison, or worse. From our law to the abominable doctrine of free love there is but one short step. Our law gives the villain who covets another's wife, or the shameless woman who seeks another husband, an easy way to gratify their licentiousness. When you, the young people of California, get the reins of power into your hands, which you will in a few more short years, honor the land of your birth by striking the objectionable feature in this law from the statute book.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NATURE OF OUR EARLY IMMIGRATION—DIFFICULTIES AND EXPENSE—THE WRITER'S OWN EXPERIENCES—THE “SOUTH CAROLINA”—CHARACTER OF THE VOYAGERS, AND THEIR AMUSEMENTS—THE ONLY LADY PASSENGER—RIO—THREE SCALAWAGS AND THEIR FATES—THE EMPEROR'S GARDEN—PUZZLING MONEY—SLAVE TRADE AND CIVIL RIGHTS—ISAAC FRIEDLANDER, CONROY AND O'CONNOR, JOHN A. MCGLYNN, W. T. SHAW, D. J. OLIVER, WM. F. WHITE—AIR CASTLES—DEAD AND LIVING.

I have said that the American immigration to this State, after the discovery of gold, was in the main of a very high order, as to intellect, education and moral standing; and this I think cannot be disputed. When the news of the gold discovery reached us in the Eastern States, in November, 1848, thousands and thousands wished to rush off to California, but the difficulties in the way were found to be very great, principally owing to the fact that no one could go who could not command enough of money to get an outfit, and pay the expenses of the trip, which required in all about five hundred dollars. This was more money than any worthless loafer or scalawag could get hold of—except he stole it, which was difficult to do. Poor fellows, of unexceptionable character, found friends to help them to the money, trusting to their honor and honesty to return it, generally agreeing to send a handsome sum in addition in case of reasonable success. This caused the immigration from the Middle and Eastern States to be decidedly select in character, and, even from the States west of the Mississippi river, mere loafers found it hard to get admitted into companies going over the plains to California; and to make the journey alone, at that time, was not possible. Without wishing to intrude my own individual history on my readers, which would be disagreeable to myself as well as to them, I will just say enough of personal experience to show from what standpoint I speak. I will describe the crowd with which I came to this State, and the voyage of the ship in which I came as passenger, and then go on and give my views of the '49ers; and when I speak of '49ers I include all who came to this State to the close of 1851, for they were all pretty much of the same general stamp of character. I will say to my young California readers that I want them, after hearing my views, to talk with their fathers and mothers and other pioneers, and judge for themselves of the probable correctness of my picture of men and things in the pioneer times. As I proceed I shall give some anecdotes, and close with some stories, all founded on well-known occurrences and facts. This I do, the better to illustrate the times, without tiring the reader.

As I before said, it is not my wish to paint those eventful three years with one virtue not fairly belonging to them, nor shall I attempt to shade over or keep from view the social excesses into which many dashed with shameless bravado, nor shall I attempt to hide from scorn the political sneak thieves of those days. No; my intention, and my wish, is not to exaggerate either the vices or virtues of the times, but to hold up to view a correct and true picture of them.

When the news of the gold discovery reached New York, I soon made up my mind to join the emigration to the Golden State. I wrote to my parents, who lived in the interior, to get their consent and blessing. Yes; I could go, and they were ready to give me their blessing when I should come for it. Over the railroad I sped to my dear, old home, knelt for the blessing, and then parted with father, mother, brothers and sisters, and the beautiful spot that was so connected with all the joys and sorrows of my childhood and boyhood, never again to set eyes on it, or on most of the dearly loved ones. I left them, that cold Winter's morning, at the railroad depot, but the wild California fever was in my blood, and carried me through a scene that, at another time, would have crushed me to the earth. Was I to go overland across the isthmus of Panama, or around Cape Horn? This was the question I had now to consider. I examined ships advertised for California; I went to the meetings of clubs formed for the overland trip. I heard all the agent of the Panama line of steamers had to say. First I decided on an overland trip, but was disgusted at a meeting of our club. Then I concluded I would go by Panama, but, on inquiry, found such crowds rushing that way that I feared great detention on the Isthmus, so I gave that idea up and finally settled on a sea trip via Cape Horn. I recollect that Caleb T. Fay was fitting out a ship for the trip, 69 and I at first thought of joining his party, but, ascertaining that the ship was old and a poor sailer, I, in the end, declined to do so. I at length found a ship—the South Carolina—that suited my ideas perfectly. She was almost new, had a commodious cabin, a fine flush deck, affording a good chance for a promenade in fine weather, and, above all, she had an intelligent, gentlemanly commander, Captain Hamilton. I paid my \$350, and secured a berth. I shipped some goods on her I wished to take to California as a venture, and was all ready for the day of sailing. That day soon came—a cold, gloomy one in January, 1849. For the last three hours the ship was at the wharf she was crowded with fathers, mothers, sisters and friends of the passengers, taking a last farewell. I remember we were surprised when it became known that we were to have one lady passenger, and it was amusing to see the lady visitors crowding around her (Mrs. White). In surprise and amazement, they exclaimed: “Oh, so young, and going to such a place as California! Are you not afraid?” “Afraid of what; there is my husband,” the lady answered, pointing to a man who looked as though there was not much risk in trusting to his protection. Then I remember a bright young girl saying to her brother, who was to be one of our passengers: “Tom, I wish I could go with you. I could go just as well as this lady.” This

was followed by several other ladies saying: “So do I,” “So do I.” Then the captain, hearing them, exclaimed: “Yes; that is what you ought to have done, ladies; but it is now too late. You will have to wait until I come back for you.” And so, in fact, Captain Hamilton did come back, and in a little over one year from that time he again left New York for California, this time in the beautiful clipper ship Adelaide, with a whole bevy of lady passengers.

When we were a week at sea we all got pretty well over our seasickness, and now the passengers began to get acquainted with each other. The first officer, Mr. Wilson, and the second mate, Mr. O’Neil, we found to be perfect gentlemen, and in every way agreeable. There were fifty-six passengers in the first cabin and one hundred in the second. When about ten days at sea, the Captain made a proposition to the first cabin passengers that on the main deck, which, as I have said, was flush from stem to stern, there should be no distinction made as to privileges between the first and second cabin passengers. To this there was not a dissenting voice in the first cabin. The result was very agreeable, as it molded us all, as it were, into one family in all the amusements we got up to kill time, or to make it pass agreeably. The passengers proved to be mostly from the interior of the State of New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. South Carolina, too, was well represented, and there were a few from the States of Ohio and Kentucky. They were, almost without an exception, a fine looking and well educated body of young men. There were not over three scalawags in the crowd. The respectful and chivalrous bearing towards ladies, which is so characteristic of Americans, showed itself brightly in the deference and polite attention every man on board the ship paid to our only lady passenger. The captain gave a general order to the officials of the ship that nothing she called for should be denied, if on board the ship. The influence of even one lady on board was found most salutary, and was often spoken of by the captain. It was certain that Mrs. White never had to complain of word or act of any of the passengers that ignored her presence. She reigned queen throughout the passage, for her “right there was none to dispute.” On our arrival at Rio Janeiro the United States sloop-of-war Perry was in the harbor, and as soon as the gallant commander heard that an American lady was on board our ship, he sent her, through Captain Hamilton, a beautiful bouquet of rare flowers and a basket of oranges fresh picked from the grove. These were accompanied by a polite note from the commander to say that

one of the boats of the Perry was at Mrs. White's command while the South Carolina should remain in port. This enabled Mrs. White, her husband, his two partners, Mr. McGlynn and Mr. Oliver, with two or three other of their friends, to enjoy their ten days in Rio most agreeably. As to that, however, we all enjoyed our visit in Rio immensely. Three other American ships came into port while we were there, filled with passengers, on their way to California. The emigrants on these ships were all much of the same stamp as ours, being almost all well educated and agreeable men. The passengers from all the ships rushed wildly over the city of Rio. There were in all about six hundred of us Americans there at the time. I think the citizens of the good city, however, imagined that there were at least six thousand, and were evidently afraid we would attempt to take the town. The police guards were doubled and trebled everywhere. But the 71 fears were without cause, for not an incident of a riotous or disorderly character took place while we were in the city. Some of the most thoughtless young Americans maneuvered a Frenchman of the name of Faroux, who kept a very fine restaurant, out of a good many dinners. This restaurant was close to where nearly all the boats from the ships landed, for at that time there was no wharf accommodation in Rio. The restaurant had a fine large eating-room, and all you chose to call for was elegantly served up. A beautiful daughter of the old man's presided at the counter, where the money was received. This, to us bachelors, was quite an attraction in itself. For the first two or three days all the meals were honorably paid for, but soon change began to grow scarce with some who were inclined to be a little fast, so they laid plans to get meals without paying for them. Some eight or ten young fellows would walk into the dining room, seat themselves around the table and call for the best dinner to be had, hesitating at no expense as to the dishes selected. When about through, one would rise from his seat, and go through a maneuver as if he were collecting money from each of his companions. Then he would walk slowly over to the young lady's counter, take his money purse from his pocket, and throw it carelessly near him on the counter. He would then light his cigar, and commence to talk soft nonsense to the young lady. While all this was going on, his companions at the table would rise from their seats, and one by one walk leisurely out into the street, and disappear in a moment. Now the young man at the counter would take up his purse and coolly hand the young lady at the counter one dollar, the price of his own dinner. "Ten dollars, sir, if you please. There were ten of you at the table." "Ten dollars, my dear young lady! What have I to do with those other fellows.

I tried to get them to give me the money to bring to you, just to have the great pleasure of talking to you, but they told me to mind my own business, so I came to pay for my own dinner, as they should have done, if they were honest men.” The young lady called for her father, but what could he do but pocket his loss? After two or three such tricks as this were played on old Faroux, his wits were sharpened, and he had a policeman stationed at the door of his restaurant, whose duty it was to see that no one left the restaurant until his bill was paid. After we left the harbor at Rio, we had a very hard storm. While it was at its height, the captain 72 declared that he believed it came upon us because we had some passengers on board who had cheated old Faroux, and that if it did not soon cease blowing, the passengers must draw lots to find the Jonah; but the wind did calm down, so no lot was drawn. One or two of our young fellows looked guilty, and feared, I suppose, if the lot fell to them, no friendly whale would come to save them. The only three scalawags we had on board showed themselves while we were in Rio, and gave the captain much trouble. They were a butcher and his two sons, from Washington Market, in New York city. The captain, however, subdued them, and put them in such awe of him that they gave no more annoyance. Their fate in California was soon decided; none of the three ever saw the year 1850. One of the sons was killed in the mines in a row of his own getting up. The other son was hanged for robbery, while the father lay drunk in a tent close at hand, exclaiming: “Oh, they are hanging my favorite boy!” He soon afterwards died himself while drunk. The harbor of Rio was beautiful, and in many points resembled the harbor of San Francisco, but the mountains at the entrance and back of the city are immensely higher than any mountains in sight at San Francisco. This makes the scenery beyond imagination wild, picturesque and majestic. We all visited the Emperor's garden, for it is free to all visitors, and, upon paying a fee to a guide, you can ramble through it all with great pleasure. In it we found every variety of plant, shrub and tree that is known to man in any part of the world. We spent a whole day in it, and then did not see one-half. The currency of the country was a puzzle to us. They count by cents, mills and milreis. When we asked the price of an article, they would perhaps announce: “One thousand reis, sir.” Of course, we made up our mind that we could not stand that price, and passed on, when in fact the price asked was very moderate. Four of us boarded with a Frenchman for five days. When we asked for our bill, we were frightened and amazed at the enormous demand. “Tell us how many dollars; how many dollars!” we all exclaimed in excitement. “Don't talk of

your milreis, we don't understand it.” “All right; I understand, gentlemen. Just fifty dollars for all four of you.” Relieved and delighted, we paid the money, and had a good laugh at our fright, for, a moment before, we saw a Rio jail staring us in the face. The negro population and the condition of the race in Rio surprised us very much. The 73 negroes that were slaves were nearly all natives of Africa, and many of them—both men and women—were of a fine physical development, tall in stature, and looked far more intelligent than the negro slaves of the South, in our own country. The free blacks were treated as perfect equals of the whites in all respects. They had a right to sit at the table with you at a hotel, and in the first seats in a theatre, among the whites. They had, in fact, the same rights exactly as the whites had. There were many black members in the Legislature, and nearly all the police force were black. Notwithstanding all this, the slave trade was fostered, or winked at, by the Government of Brazil at that time, and slavery was there in its very worse and most degraded form. While we were in port a ship discharged a cargo of slaves a few miles above the city of Rio, just brought from the coast of Africa. I did not go to see these unfortunate beings, but many of our passengers did, and the description they gave us of the creatures was truly terrible. No slave in Brazil was permitted to wear shoes. This was a regulation to enable one to distinguish the free blacks from the slaves, as you dare not refuse a free black equality in all things with yourself. It was said that free blacks were always found in favor of the most oppressive laws bearing on the slaves, and were the most cruel owners and masters. Another curious fact struck us connected with slavery in Brazil. We found that slave dealers, no matter how rich, or in what magnificence they lived, were universally despised and avoided, even by slave owners. There was an old slave dealer who lived on an island on the bay opposite the city of Rio. He was an American. I cannot recall his name. He had a perfect paradise for a residence. Everything that was beautiful surrounded him. He had retired from his horrid traffic immensely rich. On hearing of the arrival of so many of his countrymen, he came among us, and invited us cordially to his island residence. Many accepted his invitation, and on those he lavished every attention that was possible, including an elegant entertainment or lunch. Of course, we were all loud in his praises, but on hearing us talk thus the people of Rio said, in a low whisper: “Yes; he is a good sort of a man, but he made his money in the slave trade, so no one goes to see him.” I suppose such a man, when he lies down at night to sleep, forever hears the groans and cries of the unfortunate men and women he dragged

from freedom to slavery; and then what enjoyment can he have ⁷⁴ when everyone avoids him as they would a retired pirate? Our national vanity was flattered on finding regular Troy (New York) built coaches running in all directions out of Rio, and regular Troy built omnibuses, just similar to those we had left in Broadway (New York), making regular trips from one end of the city to the other. This circumstance gave us a strange pleasure, and a friendly feeling toward the people of the city. The impression left on us of Rio and its inhabitants was most pleasing, and all Americans who visited it at the time agree in this. We found many Americans and Irish residing in Rio; and, I believe, there is not a town in any part of South America where they are not to be found. Brazil is the only State in either North or South America that adheres to the monarchical form of government of its own free will. Canada is not a second exception, for that is held by the strong arms of England's military power. Mr. Parks, a State of Maine man, who was American Consul in Rio in 1849, was most kind and attentive to us all, and gave some of us an entertainment at his residence. After leaving Rio, when we all met once more on the deck of our ship, we felt as if we were old friends long known to each other. There was Isaac Friedlander, the future great grain king of California, as tall as he was at his death, but much more slender. He was a pleasant shipmate, and respected by everybody. He was the judge and umpire in all disputes in all sorts of games. He was our "Philador" on games; no one disputed his decisions. There were Conroy and o'Connor, both afterwards so long prominent as hardware and iron merchants in San Francisco. There was Halleck, afterwards so famous in the same trade in San Francisco. He was a nice, agreeable young fellow, but universally called "Shylock" among the passengers, from the fact that he sold jewelry to some of the green ones among the passengers at a large price over its true value. There was John A. McGlynn, afterwards so widely known and esteemed in California, then the most popular man on board, the favorite of the captain, who called him his "third mate," and gave him many duties to perform in that capacity. There was William J. Shaw, a young lawyer from Ithaca, New York, a very agreeable young man, afterwards well known as State Senator from San Francisco. He got rich out of a rough and tumble fight about land titles, and enjoys himself in spending his time in foreign travel. There was Denis J. Oliver, a fine, handsome, gentlemanly young ⁷⁵ fellow, then a partner of White and McGlynn, who, by close attention to his mercantile pursuits became wealthy, retired from active business, traveled the world over twice, in company with his accomplished wife

and lovely California raised children, now residing in San Francisco, esteemed and respected by all who know him, his beautiful home indicating not only his refined and cultivated taste, but assuring one that he is a Christian gentleman, proud of the faith he professes, entirely worthy of that personal friendship of the great Pontiff, Pius IX, he so eminently enjoyed.

There was Wm. F. White, the husband of our only lady passenger, who, having a treasure of priceless value to guard, seemed to make it a point to keep friends with every one. He went into the importing business with his partners, McGlynn and Oliver, in a tent at the corner of Montgomery and Sacramento streets, San Francisco, and then in a building on California street; but for many years has resided with his brave pioneer wife in Santa Cruz, where they raised a large family. He represented that district of country in the late Constitutional Convention, and is now State Bank Commissioner. There was E. P. Reed, an agreeable young man from the interior of the State of New York, now a wealthy and prominent citizen of San Jose. One of the brightest and most promising young men on board was a young lawyer from Rochester, New York, whose name was Rochester. He was a favorite with us all. But, in two short months after he set foot on California soil, death found him and closed the dear boy's career. There was poor Paschal Anderson, a tall Kentuckian, who, in fair weather, played the violin for us to dance to. He was a good-natured, merry soul. He had strange names for his pieces, such as "Cherry Pie," "Pumpkin Pie," "The Stump Tail Dog;" and he could make his old fiddle almost speak those names, to the amusement of us all. Poor Paschal! I know nothing of his fate, but whenever I think of the deck of the South Carolina, I see him playing his fiddle there yet. There was George Casserly, the driest and drollest being that ever got away from home; afterwards Police Captain in San Francisco, and later Justice of the Peace. What his fate has been I know not. There was Henry Pearsy, who got rich, I am told, by hard knocks and close attention to business in San Francisco. There was Mr. Rooney, an unobtrusive, gentlemanly little man, and his son John, who both, after an 76 honorable career in California, are now dead. An accomplished daughter of Mr. Rooney is now the wife of Senator James G. Fair, of the State of Nevada. There was Van Wyke, a fine young fellow, from the city of New York. He came of one of the first families, was just out of college, and full of fun and wit—a favorite of the captain, for whom he would sing "Mary Blaine," in a fine, full, sweet voice. The captain had a daughter,

Mary, whom he loved to almost worship, and he could listen to any song, with Mary for a heroine, for a week on the stretch without being tired. Van Wyke would get us laughing by building his air castles aloud for all. After singing us a few songs, with a good chorus from the crowd, he would exclaim: "Well, there is no use of talking, boys; I can tell you my future history now as well as I can in twenty years from now. In a few months after I get to California I will discover a mine of pure gold in the foothills near San Francisco. I will take from it all I want, just to get home comfortably, with a hundred thousand or so, to divide among my friends as a little present. I will then place the mine in charge of some trusty man, with directions to send me a quarter of a million or so every month. As soon as I get home I will not let it get out that I am so rich, for I will want to marry a most beautiful wife, who will take me, not for my money, but for myself. I will travel far and near, looking for just the girl I want. I will, at length, find her in the country, away from all the bad influences of city life. Her father will be a proud, rich man, guarding his beautiful child with perfect ferocity. I will offer to teach the mean little public school a mile distant from the rich man's residence. I will, of course, be accepted as teacher. I will then make an excuse to call at the rich man's house, on some business connected with the school—for he takes an interest in the schools for the poor, you know. I will meet the lovely, angel girl in the garden, attending to her flowers. I will offer to help to trim a thorny rose bush for her, taking care to break into some poetical quotations while I am at work for her. This will delight her. I will then take from under my arm a beautiful volume of poetry, which I will have, as if by accident, and ask her to do me the favor to retain it, and read some passages I have marked in it. Before we get through our talk I will see that she is delighted to be in my company; I will then leave, but soon, on some other excuse, I will be there again and again, until I am satisfied that she is desperately in love 77 with me. Then I will confess my love to her, and ask her consent to see her father. She gives her consent, but with tears expresses her fears that her father will never consent. I go to see the father. He flies into a rage, snatches his shotgun, and runs me out of the house, with fearful imprecations. That night I meet my love at the foot of the garden. We talk through a hole in the fence, just large enough to let my head in. She agrees to marry me in secret. I am to leave for New York to prepare things, and be back in just one week with a clergyman to tie the knot before she should leave her father's garden. I return on the appointed night; the knot is tied; we fly to New York, leaving a beautifully

affectionate note for the old man, concluding by telling him that we were married, and that he can come and see us at our humble home in the outskirts of the city of New York. Of course, I do not let him know that I have just purchased a palatial residence, lately built by a now broken Wall Street operator. The old man comes foaming, shotgun in hand. This I expect, and have a colored waiter in livery to receive him, who presents a solid gold waiter to receive his card, saying that Mr. and Mrs. Van Wyke are surrounded by ladies and gentlemen who are making their wedding calls. The old man lays his shotgun down in a confused sort of a way. Then the side door is thrown open, and my beautiful wife, covered with diamonds, falls fainting into her father's arms. All is happy, and we live a thousand years. There, boys, you have my future history.” Poor Van Wyke! On reaching San Francisco, he went to the mines, and about four months afterwards I met him in San Francisco again. On inquiring as to his luck, he said: “Well, I am on my way home. My friends are all urging me to return, and I am going. They offered to send me money to pay my way back, but I was too proud for that, so I went to work, and have earned \$800, besides \$100 worth of specimens of gold and gold quartz.” “How did you earn it, Van?” “In the most unromantic way in the world; but honestly, however. I hired out to a merchant in Stockton, at \$250 per month, to drive a mule team from that place to the mines.” I never saw Van Wyke again, and do not know what became of him; but if good wishes could make him rich and happy, he is surely both, for he helped us to many an hour of pleasure on that voyage. There were many other agreeable and pleasant young men, whose names even, in many cases, I cannot now recall; and not one disagreeable one beyond the three I have already alluded to.

78

Where now are all those young, energetic, bright fellows who were passengers on the ship South Carolina? Her brave commander, and I think more than three-fourths of her passengers, are gone to their last rest. Her two first officers, Mr. Wilson and Mr. o'Neil, are, I believe, both well off and enjoying a prosperous life. Messrs. Oliver, Shaw, Pearsy and Cunningham, of San Francisco; Reed, of San Jose, and White and his wife, of Santa Cruz, are all that I know of as living, though, of course, there are many others of whom I have lost track. To this list of the living must be added

myself, now here in Southern California, seated in my rancho office writing out these pages for our young people's entertainment.

I had the pleasure lately of spending a few days with the Whites in Santa Cruz. Of course, we talked over old times, our voyage out from New York, of San Francisco and its '49-ers. My wife, who was with me, being a '49-er, we were all in sympathy when condemning the Society of California Pioneers for not repudiating the dedication to them of such a book as the "Annals." While in that locality I heard some anecdotes from the Whites and others so characteristic of the days of '49 that I will give some of them to you before closing this subject.

CHAPTER VII.

ISLAND OF JUAN FERNANDEZ—ESCAPE OF THE CONVICTS—ENTERING THE GOLDEN GATE—UNWILLINGNESS OF CAPTAINS TO COMMAND CALIFORNIA BOUND SHIPS—PREPARATIONS TO CHECK MUTINY—MUTINIES ON TWO SHIPS, AND THEIR JUSTIFICATION.

The ship South Carolina made only one stop more after leaving Rio. We put in to the Island of Juan Fernandez for a supply of fresh water. This visit interested us all very much, for the most fascinating story we ever read in childhood was the story of "Robinson Crusoe," the scene of which was this island. We found that it had been lately used by the Chilean government as a prison for convicts, but now there was only one family living on it, and an English runaway sailor. The convicts had seized an American ship that had put in there, as we had, for water, and compelled the captain to take them all on board and sail for a certain port they named, in South America. The captain feigned to accept their terms, but ran into a port in Chile not named by them; and, on some pretence, sent a boat ashore before landing any of the convicts. In this way he warned the inhabitants of the character of his passengers, and as they landed most of them were taken prisoners, or shot in efforts to do so. The government of Chile never again attempted to use the island for that purpose. It appeared to us well stocked with wild goats, and we understood with hogs also. The garden and orchards cultivated by the convicts were yet there, which afforded us a feast of

fresh fruit. The seasons being the reverse of ours in the north, the fruits were all ripening just at that time.

On the last day of June, 1849, we entered the Golden Gate of San Francisco Bay without a pilot, with every rag of canvas spread, not one accident or death having happened to us on the voyage. Captain Hamilton was in wild, joyous spirits at this happy termination of a voyage he had begun with serious anxiety for the result. The Cape Horn immigration was looked on by the captains of the merchant vessels with a good deal of apprehension. They feared to go to sea with a crowd of American passengers, as they thought it would be hard for them to brook the one-man power only known on board a ship at sea. They feared that the spirit of independence, which is so much a part of every American's composition, that is fostered by his education from childhood to manhood, would make it almost impossible for him to submit to a power entirely dictatorial in its character. On this account, many of the New York captains declined the command of ships intended for this new trade to California. They said: "I have often and often come from Europe without the least fear or thought of insubordination from the passengers, but they were Europeans and in the habit all their lives of being governed, this way or that, without daring to ask questions as to why their rulers did this or did that; but not so our countrymen. Their rulers are mere puppets in their hands, who have to dance to whatever tune their masters, the people, choose to play for them, without so much as daring to ask their masters why they play that tune. No, no; save me from a shipload of Yankee passengers. You will find that just as soon as they recover from their first seasickness they will hold a 'mass meeting' on the quarter-deck, without deigning to ask the captain's permission, and prescribe rules for the government of the ship; or perhaps they will depose the captain altogether, and put in his place a popular sailor taken from before the mast, as their idea will be to run the ship on democratic principles. So, excuse me from the command of a California passenger ship." This feeling was so universal among the American commanders that none but men of nerve and courage accepted the position, and the greatest care was taken to get officers and a crew of first-class men. Every ship was well provided with small arms and handcuffs and shackles, to be used in any emergency, but never was a more unfounded fear entertained, as the result proved.

The same education that taught the American boy independence of thought, feeling and action, also taught him the absolute necessity of every American citizen, who claimed to have a particle of propriety or decency in his composition, standing by and upholding all laws made, either by his own State or by Congress. We are all naturally proud of our country; we 81 believe in its government and in its laws, without a dissenting voice; we know these laws are our own and that none but the worthless or wicked disregard them.

The immigration to California, particularly the sea-going part of it, was, as I have before stated, almost universally of reasonably well educated people. Many of them never saw a ship or the ocean before they embarked for California; but, notwithstanding this, they perfectly understood that by the laws made by Congress the captain of every ship was a dictator in power the moment a ship was out of harbor, and each man perfectly comprehended that his own welfare, and in fact his life, depended on the captain's being defended and maintained in that power. They did not yield a blind obedience, it is true, as did the European immigrant passengers, but they did yield an intelligent obedience fully as complete, and of ten times the value, for it held out in times of peril and danger, when the slavish sort would be sure to fail. And so it is with the whole theory of our American institutions. They are founded on equality and justice to all, and supported and guarded by the intelligence of the people, and will stand shocks that would throw other nations into chaos most deplorable. How clearly this is shown by the result of the war of the rebellion. Captain Hamilton, of the South Carolina, shared in these apprehensions of danger I have mentioned, and made every preparation possible to guard and protect himself in any emergency. In talking this matter over with Mr. White, my fellow passenger, last Summer, he alluded to a conversation between himself and Captain Hamilton, which he had once before repeated to me in San Francisco. It is worth giving, as it illustrates this point of our early California history. Captain Hamilton was a fine, intelligent looking man, large and well built. He was just the beau-ideal of an American merchant ship commander. As he paced the quarter-deck, his dark grey eyes seemed to take in every spar, rope, sail and man on board that whole ship. As you looked at him, you felt he was a power, and a power in which you could implicitly trust. Mr. White said: "It was our third day out and the first fine day we had, comparatively speaking; for it was yet gloomy and rough. I was seated by my wife trying to assume

a cheerful tone about things in general, so as to encourage her, when the captain suddenly turned round from his walk on the quarter-deck, came directly towards us and took a seat by us, saying: 82 with a calm sort of smile: ‘Good morning to you both; good morning, Mrs. White. How do you feel? Three days off of one hundred and fifty. How do you think you will hold out?’ ‘Oh, I will do first rate, captain; I made up my mind, you know, before we started, to stand it; and now there is nothing else for me to do, and I have no wish to do anything else and have no regrets whatever.’ ‘I am glad to hear you say so, Mrs. White, and glad you look forward so cheerfully to the privations of a long passage. The men I do not mind, but I cannot help thinking of you all the time.’ We both expressed our sincere thanks. ‘Yes,’ he responded; ‘I cannot help thinking of you both all the time, you are so peculiarly situated; and I made up my mind that I would talk to you plainly, for it is right to do so, to put you on your guard, and Mrs. White has shown such courage that she will not be frightened, I am sure.’ As he now spoke his face assumed a set, determined expression, and his grey eyes looked fierce, but not cold. I felt the blood rush back on my heart, and I saw my wife grow pale, but neither of us uttered a word, and the captain continued: ‘I have been at sea with more passengers than I have now, two to one, and never feared them any more than I would so many rats; but a ship full of my own countrymen is a different thing. Each one of these thinks he knows just as much as the captain, if not a great deal more, and, of course, they can overpower the captain of a merchant ship if they are so disposed, and take the ship out of his hands, and many think that will be the result with most of our California going ships at this time. Now, this concerns you both more than it does any one else on board, so I thought I would just tell you what I will do in case I find I cannot maintain myself in command, and I want your full consent. My two first officers are with me, and I shall consult no one else. I have plenty of small arms and sixty pair of ‘ruffles,’ an article I never took to sea before, and if the passengers undertake to get the ship away from me they will find it no child's play; but if I see they are about to succeed, I will *put her down*. Yes; I will take this ship, and you in it, safe in my command to San Francisco, if the Lord spares my life and allows her to float, or *sink her* with all on board! What do you say, both of you?’ I felt a choking sensation, but, without saying a word, I turned to my wife. She was pale, but perfectly composed, and without the least hesitation said in a quick, decided voice: ‘Yes, captain; 83 if they dare take the ship from you, *sink her*! We are perfectly satisfied.’ The captain instantly rose to his feet, and, extending his

hand to my wife, said: ‘All right, Mrs. White; just the answer I expected from you. We will do it, as sure as there is a God in Heaven.’ Proud of the cool courage of my little wife, I then said: ‘Now, captain, *that* is settled; but let me assure you that your fears are totally unfounded. I am perfectly satisfied there are 100 of the 150 passengers now on board that would die fighting by your side sooner than see the ship go out of your command.’ ‘I hope so; I hope you are right; we shall soon see.’ In about ten days after this conversation, the captain again came to where my wife and I were seated on deck. He was all smiles, and looked most happy. After taking a seat he said: ‘Since I last talked with you I have become acquainted with most of the passengers, and I find you are right in your estimate of their characters. There are at least 125 of them as true and good men as ever trod a deck, and will stand by me while there is a plank left under us.’ Of all the ships that left Atlantic American ports in 1849, for California, two were taken by the passengers from the captains, but in both these instances the captains proved to be worthless drunkards, and the justification was so plain that no one was prosecuted.”

CHAPTER VIII.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF SAN FRANCISCO—ITS HURRY OF BUSINESS—MEETING OLD FACES—\$7,000 GAIN ON AN INVESTMENT OF NOTHING—A LESSON FROM “TONY”—FIRST BRICK BUILDING—JOHN A. McGLYNN AN ONE OF SAN FRANCISCO'S TWO WAGONS—THE MONTHLY MAIL—CURIOUS GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS—MR. McGLYNN AT THE GREAT FIRE.

Now we are all on shore in San Francisco, what do we find? What do we see all around us? According to the “Annals,” we should find a crowd of men and lewd women, both lost to every thought of restraint and decency. Never was a falser representation made. No; we found ourselves surrounded by a fast, rushing, surging people, where every hour of daylight appeared of immense value to them. No one had time to talk to you, except on business. You met men you had never seen before, whose names you did not know, or care to know, and did business with them, often involving thousands, with perfect trust in their word, for it was worth no man's while to tell a lie, even if he had that mean propensity, in those days; and, if such a fellow there was, he was soon

found out and elbowed out of the way, and that was the end of *him*. As I hurried along Montgomery street, on the second day of my arrival, I met a young man I had known in New York as a clerk in a hardware store. I only knew his first name, and that was "Tony." I did not know that he had left for California. "Hello, Tony, is that yourself?" "Oh, yes; I came across Mexico with Frank Turk, who is here also. How long are you here, Gray?" "Nearly two days." "What have you done since you came? How much have you made?" "Not a dollar, so far." "No? Why, I have made \$7,000; but then I have been here ten days." "Tell a fellow how you made it." "Why, I went up here on this street they call Sacramento street, and I saw eight lots advertised for sale there. I went to the owners and bought them all, though I had not ten dollars to my name; but the holder of the lots 85 gave me until four o'clock in the afternoon to get the money; so before that hour I had sold five of the lots for just the price of the eight, and this forenoon I sold the last of the other three, by which I netted in the transaction just \$7,000." "But, Tony, suppose you had failed in selling, what would you have done?" "Oh, what would I have done? Oh, in that case, I would just explain that I failed in getting the money, and what could he do?" "Well, but I have some goods, you know." "Well, sell the goods, Gray, as soon as you can. Get rid of them in some way, put the money in your pocket and dash in, just as I have. But where are you going now?" "Well, I am going to see Frank Ward and C. L. Ross on some business." "Have you a letter of introduction to either of them? If you have, never present it; no one here has time to read such things. No one cares ever to know your name. If you are the right sort of a man everything goes smoothly here. So don't bother about letters of introduction. They are only laughed at and thrown unread into the waste basket. I just met a man," Tony continued, "this morning, I had done some business with, and I asked him the name of his partner, and he answered, 'Oh, I have only been in with him two months, and I never thought of asking him his name.' That is our style in California; but in a few days you will understand it yourself. So, good morning." As Tony left, I could not help laughing at the lesson I had just received in "the ways of the place." Poor Tony, what has become of him I know not. I hope he may be rich and happy somewhere. His career in California was short and successful, with an end that might have been anticipated from such a reckless beginning.

At this time, July, 1849, there was just one brick building on Montgomery street. It stood on the west side, some 200 feet north of Sacramento street. It was a two-story, large house, having a frontage of, perhaps, 100 feet on Montgomery street, with a sort of a porch or piazza along the front. It was owned by Howard, Mellis & Co., old-time Californians. About the last of July I was surprised one day to see this building undergoing alterations and repairs of every sort. The result was that it was cut into offices and stores, with one large store on the ground floor, over the door of which now appeared a flaming, large sign, of "Bleaker, Van Dyke & Co.," auctioneers, with an additional notice in small letters that Mr. Bleaker, a relative of the famous 86 auctioneer of that name in New York city, would devote his whole attention to the auction branch of the business. I had that day purchased an invoice of goods, and it occurred to me to try some of them at auction; so I went to the store, and the first person I saw was Tony, who, I soon found, was no other than Mr. Bleaker, and that was the first time I knew his name. He received me cordially, saying: "Well, Gray, what do you think of our doings here? We rented this large lot and all this building from Howard, Mellis & Co. for two years at \$3,000 a month. We have cut it up so that we get \$8,000 a month rent and the use of this store." I, of course, congratulated him on such a good start, and put my business in his hands. He attended to it well, and we had many transactions afterward equally satisfactory. This firm made money very fast, and, I think, it was in the early part of '50 that Tony sold out to his partners for \$200,000, \$50,000 cash down and three notes of \$50,000 each, at six, twelve and eighteen months. There was a clause in the notes providing that, in case the buildings were destroyed by fire before the notes became due, that fact should cancel the obligation to pay them. Tony, of late, had begun to gamble, and was losing heavily, and this was, in fact, the reason he sold out, as his partner refused to continue any longer with him. When he sold out, his intention was to return to New York at once, where he had left a charming, young wife, but one more game must he have before leaving San Francisco forever, so that night he visited Jim Recket's handsomely furnished gambling rooms on Clay street. At the dawn of day the next morning he wished Jim and every dollar of his \$50,000 a last good-by—the \$50,000 forever, but not so Jim Recket, for Tony came back the next night and put up the six month note, and at daylight the next morning wished good-by to that also. The next night Tony again tried his luck, and lost the twelve month note. As he was leaving the saloon, Jim Recket, who was a sort of prince in his business,

coolly said to him: "Now, you confounded fool, go to your old partners, tell them what an ass you have made of yourself, and ask them to let you have a few thousand on that last note, and leave in the steamer that goes to Panama to-day. If they won't do it, come to me, and I will get some one to do it. Do as I tell you, or to-morrow you will not have a dollar. I would not have cleaned you out, but I saw you were on it, and I might as well have it as any one else." Tony did as Recket 87 told him, and his partners did advance \$10,000 on the last note, and with that money, and the note indorsed with this payment, he left for New York that very day. My recollection is that Dr. Harris afterwards told me that Tony lost every dollar of the \$10,000 playing poker on the steamer; so Tony met his poor young wife just as poor as when he left her, for a fire did come before any one of these notes became due, sweeping away Van Dyke & Co.'s building, so that these notes were never paid.

The same day I met Tony I met John A. McGlynn. He was leading two half-wild mules. "Why, John, what are you going to do with those rats? Did you buy them?" "Yes; of course I did. We brought a wagon and harness with us from New York, and I am going to hitch up those mules and go to teaming. I can make more money that way than any other, for there is but one wagon in San Francisco besides ours, and that is the one owned by Howard, Mellis & Co." "Where did you get the mules?" "My partner and myself walked out through the sand to the Mission Dolores, and we bought them of an American we found there, of the name of Parker. We did not meet a human being on the way to the Mission but two American Oregon boys, about twelve and sixteen years of age. They had no shoes on, nor much clothes either. They had axes on their shoulders, so we asked them how much they made a day cutting wood. They said an ounce each; so I said to my partner that if such looking boys could make \$16 a day, it showed that we had not struck the wrong country after all."

John A. McGlynn was so well known in California that a few words in relation to him may not be uninteresting to you. He is the best representative of those times that I can draw to my mind. He was an out-and-out Californian in all his manners and ways. For the four years I resided in San Francisco McGlynn and myself were warm friends, and in after years, when I visited San Francisco, if I did not meet John and have a regular sit-down talk with him, I did not feel as if I had been in the city. As a man, he was as honest as the sun; as a friend, there were few like him, and none

more unselfish or better. He had but few personal enemies and many friends. As I was saying, he commenced his career in San Francisco by hitching up his wild California mules to the wagon brought into the country by White, McGlynn & Co., and started as a regular teamster. He wore a red flannel shirt and an old white hat, 88 which will be well remembered by San Francisco '49ers. This firm soon picked up a second wagon, for which they paid some enormous price, and the first driver they hired for the second team was a young lawyer who had studied law with New York's favorite Senator, Daniel S. Dickenson. This lawyer's turning teamster amused John very much, so that, in writing home to his mother in New York, he said: "We have to-day hired a lawyer to drive a mule team. That is all the use lawyers are out here. We pay him \$175 a month. Then, when you meet Judge White, my partner's brother, tell him this." Mrs. McGlynn, John's mother, wrote in reply: "I saw Judge White and told him what you said, and he told me to say to you that he, as a lawyer, must say you could not have done better in the selection of a driver, and that he had no doubt your mule team would be well and *profitably* handled, for that the whole business of a lawyer is to know how to manage mules and asses, so as to make them pay." In three or four months later there were all sorts of vehicles used for hauling goods and lumber in San Francisco. There was the Pennsylvania heavy wagon, the Boston unwieldy dray, the New York light dray, the New Orleans outlandish dray, and many other sorts, suitable and unsuitable. Fine American horses began also show themselves in San Francisco. Every man in the draying business looked up to John as a leader. In case of a dispute, his decision was always taken as law. Howard, Mellis & Co.'s fine wagon and team, the only one in the city at that time equal to those John controlled, was driven by a Chileno, a powerfully built man. Goods were mostly, at that time, delivered from the ships in lighters at the foot of Sacramento street, at a little wharf about a hundred feet long, extending from where Sansome street now is to the water.

When a ship was discharging, so many drays of all sorts, mostly drawn by half-wild, unbroken horses, would crowd to this landing place, that great confusion would ensue. To remedy this, the draymen held a meeting, over which John presided, and adopted regulations to govern such cases.

The next day there was a jam at the little wharf as usual; all, however, governed themselves by the rules adopted, except the driver of Howard, Mellis & Co.'s team. He dashed in his heavy American

mules, regardless of whom he discommoded. John ordered him to take his place according to the rule in such cases, 89 but he paid no attention to the order. John gave the order again, and this time accompanied with a welt of his New Orleans driver's whip on the Chileno man's shoulders. In an instant more they had both leaped from their wagon seats to the ground. The Chileno rushed toward Mack with bowie-knife in hand. John was unarmed. He was left-handed, for which the Chileno was not prepared, and John's blow dropped him to the ground, and in an instant he had him pinioned fast, and held him so until he promised good behavior. On regaining his feet, the Chileno invited all hands to drink, and John never had a warmer personal friend in after times than that driver. Through all the year of '49 we had but one mail a month, via Panama. When the steamer arrived with the mail the town was in excitement, and a rush to the Postoffice for letters was in order, without any pretence of doing it in order, except in one respect, as follows: There was but one delivery window, and a line was formed from this window, always of immense length. The Postoffice was then in the old adobe at the upper side of the Plaza. At these times I have often seen the line extend from the Postoffice across the Plaza and down Clay street nearly to Montgomery. On one of these occasions I took my place in the line, about three o'clock in the afternoon. Some distance ahead of me in the line, I saw John McGlynn quietly reading a newspaper. I pulled a paper from my pocket and followed his example. So we progressed slowly and surely, but more slowly than surely.

It was nine o'clock in the evening when John reached the delivery window. Just then the round, fat face of a little Englishman employed in the Postoffice appeared at the open square, and said, in a loud, authoritative voice: "No more letters to-night. It is nine o'clock." And down he slapped the slide. John instantly tapped loudly on the pane of window glass. The fat little man turned around and looked; John beckoned to him to draw near, saying: "What did you say, sir?" The little official put his face up close to the pane of glass, saying in the same loud voice: "Are you deaf, fellow? I said no more letters to-night!"

He had hardly said the last word when Mack's fist came crashing through the glass, right on top of the little man's nose, laying him full length on the Postoffice floor, spouting blood like a whale when struck by a harpoon. Our whole line, of 90 course, gave John three hearty cheers. Mack turned round to us and said, in the coolest way, "Keep in your line, boys; it is only a little

Englishman that did not know 'our ways.' I had to give him a lesson, that is all. Keep your line, boys."

A man by the name of Short, who was employed in the Postoffice and who knew McGlynn, now came running to the window, and, again opening the delivery slide, called out: "Oh, Mr. McGlynn, do not let them pull down the door. We will deliver; we will deliver;" and so they did while there was a man to ask for a letter that night. I, of course, enjoyed the scene very much; but I felt sure John would be called up before the Alcalde the next day. So, when next I met him, I asked him if any trouble had come to him out of the matter. "Trouble," said he, "why of course not. Colonel Geary called on me the next day, and made the most ample apology for having told them to shut the window at nine. He said he had poor pay, and but few clerks allowed him by the Government; so I excused him, and we had a drink and parted the best of friends, the Colonel assuring me, over and over again, that nothing of the kind should happen again." I laughed immoderately at this, while Mack pretended not to see anything strange or ludicrous in it, but I saw from the twinkle of his eye that he enjoyed the Postmaster's calling to apologize. "Look at my hand," he continued; "it has two cuts on it; whether from the glass or the Englishman's nose, I cannot tell."

E. Harrison was the Collector of the Port of San Francisco in 1849. There was no regularity in the way the duties were collected. Harrison was appointed by Governor Mason or Governor Riley, and told to collect the duties according to the laws of the United States, as nearly as he could. He did so, I believe, to the best of his judgment, and I hope honestly, but he kept few, if any accounts, and very few assistants or clerks. Generally, when a ship arrived, its captain would call on the Collector and give a full exhibit of his cargo. The Collector then sent for each of the owners or consignees of the goods. They showed their invoices, and the Collector, or his clerk, made out a statement of what each merchant should pay. This the merchant paid, without any dispute or hesitation. The Collector then took the money, put it into a sack, without making any book account of it. When he had any expenses to pay, that he thought were chargeable to the Government, he paid 91 them out, and what was left in the sack was kept for Uncle Sam until he should call for it. When a sack got full under this process, it was sewed up and laid aside, and another put in the process of filling. These sacks were made of heavy canvas, or buckskin. Stealing, at this time in San Francisco,

was almost unknown, which may account for Mr. Harrison's not being particularly careful of his sacks, as would appear from a circumstance told me by John McGlynn. John said his firm had done some draying for the Custom House to the amount of four or five hundred dollars. He called on the Collector for it. Mr. Harrison looked at the bill and said: "All right, Mack." "Here, Tom," speaking to his only clerk; "go up stairs, and under the table to the left hand side you will see five buckskin sacks full of gold. The top one you will find open. Out of that pay Mr. McGlynn his bill of \$475, and put the sack back, just as you found it." "Yes, Mr. Harrison, I will do so; but you are mistaken in the number of the sacks there. There are only four in all." "Oh, yes, Tom; I know there are five, for I counted them yesterday, when I put that last one there." "No, Mr. Harrison; you are mistaken. I know, for I counted them this morning, when I paid that boatman his bill out of the open sack." "Now, Tom, I know you are mistaken, and I will just stand the dinners for us three that there are four full sacks and one nearly full, which is open." "I will take that bet," said Tom. All proceeded upstairs, and, to the Collector's surprise, Tom was right; so they went to the restaurant, and the bet was paid. The clerk and Mack laughed heartily, and the latter had an idea that the clerk had the cream of the joke. Soon after this, Collector James Collier arrived with President Taylor's commission in his pocket. He was a large, pompous man, disagreeable in his manner, and had no faith in California, except as a place to make money and then clear out from, before "the bottom fell out," as was his favorite expression. On arriving, Collier called on Harrison at his "Custom House" rooms. He was all pomposity, and wished to know when it would be convenient for Mr. Harrison to turn over the office of Collector to him. "Now, right away," said Harrison; "come along with me." Collier followed. "Now," said Harrison, "here is the room; the rent of it is paid up to the first of next month. These two desks and these four chairs belong to the Government, for I paid for them out of the money I collected, and here are twenty-four sacks of 92 cash." As Harrison pointed to the cash, he turned to leave the room. "Sir," said Collier, "before you go, please count that cash out to me." "Count it out yourself, Mr. Collier, if you wish it counted. I have not the least idea how much is there, nor do I care, as to that matter. I know all I ever collected, except my salary and expenses, is there—that is, if no one stole any of it. So good morning, Collector; I hope you will have luck in your new position. I am glad you have come, for I was terribly tired of the business."

So Collier made a great flourish of counting the money before witnesses, and of reporting the matter to Washington.

When the desolating fire of May 4, 1851, swept the city, the Chief of the Fire Department, F. D. Kohler, was absent in Sacramento, and John A. McGlynn, being his first assistant, had to take charge of that terrible battle against the devouring flames, and acquitted himself well. All night did the firemen work as firemen never worked before. They had to use the old-fashioned fire engines, which were worked by hand. Daylight came to find the flames not yet subdued. John's men were all getting exhausted, and he was pressing every able-bodied man he could see into the service, to help the poor fellows who had worked so faithfully. He spied a huge, comfortable-looking individual sauntering down Sacramento street, who wore a light-colored, heavy pea-jacket. His hands were thrust into its pockets, and as he walked he had an air of self-complacency that indicated that he was rather enjoying the scene before him. His expression of face plainly said: "Work on, you chaps, there at that engine. As for me, this is none of my funeral." He was, in fact, of that class then known in San Francisco as "Sydney Ducks." John stepped up to him, and said, in a quick, decided voice: "Here, friend, give us a hand at this engine. The boys are very tired." The Sydney man muttered something in reply, which John did not hear, and passed on. In ten minutes the fellow sauntered back again, looking rather contemptuously at the tired-out workers. Mack could not stand his insolent way of acting any longer; so, stepping directly in front of him, he said: "Here, friend, turn right in and help those boys." At the same time he laid his hand on his collar and gave him a slight jerk to face him for the engine. The Sydney man drew back indignantly, and made a blow at John's outstretched arm to knock it from his collar. In an instant John's left fist, 93 clenched into hard iron, came like a trip-hammer on the nose and about the eyes of the Sydney man, completely confusing him, and before he could recover his senses John, with one or two powerful jerks, brought him to the shaft of the engine. Here, without an effort at resistance, the fellow laid hold, and worked with the rest; but the blood spurted from his nose and made a terrible sight, so John whispered to one of his men that he would walk down the street, as if to examine one of the other engines, and that as soon as he was a little way off to tell the Sydney man to run. These directions were carried out to

the letter, and when Mack returned the boys told him that, for a fat man, that Sydney man had made the best time they ever saw at a foot-race.

At this time Frank Tilford was City Recorder—or Police Judge, as that official is now called. While holding Court the next day after the fire, a large, fat man, wearing a heavy peajacket, his nose all swollen, and his eyes bunged up, made his appearance and addressed the Judge: “Your Honor, my name is Jenkins. I am a free-born Englishman, just arrived, three days ago, from Sydney, and I now come to your Honor to demand justice for an outrageous attack upon my person by a freman, whose number I have taken down from the cap he wore when he assaulted me.” As he spoke he handed the Judge the number. He then went on to give the Judge a very correct account of the whole circumstance. The Judge listened patiently, and with some difficulty preserved his gravity, as he at once recognized McGlynn as the chief in the play. Then he addressed Jenkins thus: “Sir, I have heard you state your case, and have to say to you that it is most fortunate for you that the fireman whose number you have given me is not now here to hear your story, or my duty would compel me to fine you \$100, and imprison you in the County Jail for thirty days, for disobeying the order of that fireman. This, sir, would have been the result on your own statement.” Jenkins, on hearing this, glanced with his blurred eyes all round the Court-room, as if in fear that McGlynn might appear, and then made a rush for the door, and was once more on a quick run.

This scene amused Judge Tilford very much, and when repeating it over to McGlynn they both enjoyed a hearty laugh. From these anecdotes of McGlynn's pioneer life, if you were not personally acquainted with him, you might suppose him to be 94 rough and quarrelsome, but this would be a mistake. He was always polite, affable, and gentle and mild as a woman in his daily intercourse with all with whom he came in contact. He was sensitive to wrong or discourtesy offered, but generous and forgiving towards all. One day, in 1850, it was rumored around that the orphans in the Market street asylum were in danger of suffering from want of actual necessities. Some persons assembled to plan relief; a proposition was adopted that one hundred persons should be called upon, asking each one to give \$10; no more and no less was to be taken. It so happened that I was placed on this committee of solicitation. There was no get-off, so I started out with two others, and we soon got the thousand dollars required. When we went to John McGlynn, he heard what we said,

and without replying he took from his pocket a fifty-dollar slug, a sort of coin then in circulation in San Francisco, and handed it to us. One of the committee began to get out \$40 in change, but John said: “No; I want no change.” “No, no,” said I; “that will not do, John. You shall not give more than any one of the rest of us. Our instructions are, not to allow any one to give over \$10.” “Oh, well,” said he, “keep the slug; it is a sort of a coin that is getting very unpopular here, and I do not want it, and the orphans do want it. Enter it as \$10 if you will.” But we entered John A. McGlynn \$50 on that subscription list, and gave the “unpopular coin” to the orphans.

As, in years afterwards, poor John passed the portals to a better world, let us believe without a doubt that he found before him, in the great ledger in which is kept an account of all our actions here below, that entry of the “unpopular coin” bright and dazzling on the credit side of his account.

CHAPTER IX.

THE THREE CLASSES OF CITIZENS—THE GENTLEMEN POLITICIANS—THE CAUSE OF THE VIGILANCE COMMITTEES—THE TYPICAL MINER—WELCOME ARRIVALS. INGENIOUS FURNITURE—EARLY LAW COURTS.

From the digression in the last chapter let me go back to what I was saying of the general appearance of San Francisco and its inhabitants, on the last day of June, 1849. All, as I have said, was bustle and rush in every sort of business. There was not much talking about it; but, on the contrary, every one had a remarkably quiet, but earnest and off-hand sort of a way of dealing that was fascinating to one engaged in trade. You made up your mind, after looking around for two or three days, that the immigration to California was dividing itself into three classes—first; the earnest, industrious workers, who had the will, and would find the way, to accomplish success in their new homes. This class comprised at least *four-fifths* of the American immigrants, and perhaps as large a share of the immigrants from other lands. The American population at this time seemed to outnumber all others twenty to one. The next class that attracted your attention was a class of idle loungers around the gambling saloons—fellows who came to California with an idea that they could get gold without working for it. They never had worked in their lives, and would rather starve

than do it now. This class did not amount to ten per cent. of the immigrants, but was large enough to breed terrible mischief in the near future. There was then a third class, composed, perhaps, of ten per cent. more of the immigrants. They were gentlemen politicians. They had been politicians in their own homes, but had there run themselves out, and now came to California to make a new beginning, to take a new start, as it were. Out of this class grew the treasury thieves and the real estate plunderers of San Francisco, for the first four years of her existence as 96 an American city. In making this assertion, of course I do not mean to condemn this whole class as bad men. No; what I mean is, that, as a class, they were a bad crowd. Look over the names of the delegates to the Monterey Constitutional Convention, and, though mostly good men, not one solid business man is to be found there, if you except some old-time ranchero. If you look over the names of the members of the first three Legislatures, the same fact will appear. Look over the names of the San Francisco Board of Aldermen, for the first four years, and it is very little more than a list of her despoilers. The reason of all this is very plain. The business men were independent of politics, and despised the business, leaving it to be manipulated by the gentlemen loafers of the third class, who could not or would not make a living in any other way. This third class differed from the second class, in so far that they pretended to respectability, and held themselves high above the second class. They were educated, very polite, and sly in their movements, made great pretensions to honesty and to a self-sacrificing spirit for the public good, while their time was wholly occupied with schemes to get themselves into office, and, after they got in, with plans to rob the treasury and plunder the city generally. Take the second and third class together, and, although not one-fifth of the men of San Francisco, yet they were so numerous and made themselves so prominent, that to a stranger they seemed ten times the number that they were. These composed the crowd that the authors of the "Annals" describe, all through their book, as "the people of San Francisco." Out of this class came the "highly respectable citizens" who spent their time, night after night, at gambling tables; out of this class come the "high dignitaries" who attended magnificent entertainments "by invitation" at disreputable houses, such as the "Annals" describe. That the authors of the "Annals" met Judges, Legislators and Aldermen in many carousals at such houses, I have not the least doubt, nor will any one, when it is considered that such officials, at that time, often belonged to this third class I have described, who were almost all loathsomely immoral in their lives.

Now, how was it with the business men? Say, the other four-fifths of the people of San Francisco. I assert it as a fact, that they seldom, or never, entered a gambling saloon, except as a matter of curiosity for a few moments, once or perhaps twice. 97 I say, further, that if a business man in San Francisco found any of his clerks or employees frequenting such places he at once discharged them as unsafe. The routine of business in San Francisco, at that time, was terribly fatiguing. The business day was from daylight until nine or ten o'clock at night. Not a man in business but lay down at night tired and worn out with the labors of the day. They worked like men to build up here a home for themselves. They worked not to prove false to the friends at home, who aided them in their California enterprise. They worked for the wives and children they left behind them, and strained every nerve to get into a position to be surrounded once more with those so dearly loved. Yes; hundreds and hundreds of these men are now known among us, or their children, and we are proud of them. But where are those who composed the second and third classes? There is hardly one of them left; and what has become of their plunder? It has melted away in their hands, and has, like most of them, disappeared. Of course there were exceptions, as there always is, to every rule. There were some honorable men who held office in the early days in San Francisco, and so there were some precious rascals among business men; but they likewise were few. The greatest fault the business men were guilty of was that they would neither hold office themselves nor give any attention to the elections. In this way the objectionable classes managed the whole thing. It was this neglect that brought on the first and second Vigilance Committees, which in the end had such damaging influences on the prosperity of the whole State. Let me here quote for you a passage from Governor Burnett's Message to the first Legislature of California, as showing his opinion of the character of the pioneers. He says:

“We have a new community to organize, a new State to build up. We have also to create and sustain a reputation in the face of the misconceptions of our character that are entertained elsewhere. But we have the most excellent materials out of which to construct a great community and a great State—emigration to this country from the States east of the Rocky Mountains consists of their most energetic, enterprising and intelligent population, while the *timid* and the *idle*, who have neither the *energy* nor the *means* to get here, were left to remain at home.”

Governor Burnett was our first Governor under the State Constitution, and was one of the purest men that ever held public office in any country. He wrote this message while smarting 98 under the insulting comments of the Eastern and foreign press on us here in California. The good Governor speaks nothing but what every one knows to be truth, as to the character of our pioneers; but the closing words of the paragraph caused us all to enjoy a good laugh, for the inference is, that *all* the people remaining in the Eastern States were “timid,” “idle,” lame ducks, as it were, without money or friends.

At the tenth annual picnic of the Tuolumne Reunion Association, held at Badger's Park, this last summer, Rev. T. Hamilton, a highly esteemed clergyman, in his eloquent address on that occasion, alluded to the general character of the pioneers, and as his testimony is of the highest character, I quote a passage taken from the *Call* newspaper's report. He says:

“The founders of the State were, by force of circumstances, choice spirits. The distance to be traveled and the obstacles to be encountered required that they should be men of a certain degree of wealth, and full of energy and manliness. Most of them were men of education, many of them graduates of some American or European university. In his own pioneer congregation of five hundred there were no less than twenty distinguished graduates. The influence of such men was always exerted in the right direction, and consequently had a beneficial effect upon the community.”

The New York *Tribune*, of January 26, 1849, says:

“The class of our citizens which is leaving us for this El Dorado is of the better sort—well educated, industrious and respectable—such as we regret to part with. The rowdies, whom we could well spare, cannot, as a general thing, fit themselves out for so long a voyage.”

That such balls were given at houses like those described in the “Annals” was of course true, and that they were attended by judges and other office-holders, I have but little doubt; but it is utterly false to assert that the respectable business men, comprising so large a share of our community as

they did, ever attended such balls, or consorted, as the “Annals” assert they did openly, with such company as the authors of the “Annals” say they met at those houses by invitation.

I recollect a difficulty growing out of an attempt at a joke in regard to one of these balls, in 1849. A young man procured an invitation to a ball of this character to be sent to a friend of his, a Mr. B., a merchant of the first respectability, who to-day is well known in San Francisco and respected by all. After the invitation was received, the young fellow took care that outsiders should know of its reception. At first it created a good deal of amusement at B.'s expense, but the joke was kept up a little too long, and ended in a serious quarrel, a challenge, an acceptance and a meeting. But no shots were exchanged, as friends interfered; and all ended in the young man's making an ample apology.

It is true that many lucky miners, coming to San Francisco from the interior, visited gambling saloons, lost their money, and committed excesses against decency and morality; but it is also true that hundreds and hundreds of such, coming from the mines, did their business in the city in a quiet, earnest way, without committing one act of indiscretion or losing one dollar foolishly.

To look at the returned miners in those days in San Francisco the first impression you would get was that they were all of a rough cast of men, uneducated and savage. Their uncut hair, their long beards, their red flannel shirts, with flashy red Chinese scarfs around their waists, the black leather belt beneath the scarf, fastened with a silver buckle, to which hung the handsome six-shooter and bowie-knife, the slouched, wide-brimmed hat, the manly, bold, independent look and gait of the man as he walked along, made each one look the chief of a tribe of men you had no knowledge of before. Get into conversation with this man, and you will find, to your surprise, in nine cases out of ten, a refined, intelligent, educated American, despising the excesses of the idle and the dissipated. You will find his whole heart on his old home and those he has left there. Look up as he speaks to you of wife and children and draws from beneath his red shirt a photograph of those loved ones, and you will find him brushing away tears that have fallen on his great shaggy beard. Stand behind such a looking man in the long line from the Postoffice window, waiting for his turn to get letters. See; he takes his letters from the clerk at the window, and his whole frame shakes with emotion, and, as

he looks at the well known handwriting, his handkerchief is again on his face. Here are the sort of pioneers the authors of the "Annals" somehow never saw. A circumstance which occurred to myself will show how completely the miner's dress of '49 changed and disguised him.

I was busy selling goods in my store, when a miner, just such as I have described, entered, announcing that he wanted to purchase some clothes. I pointed to a pile of men's clothing and told him to take what he wanted, and when he had made his selections I would tell him what he had to pay. He did as I told him, and I went on with my business. In one part of our store there was a room curtained off, where my partner slept, and occupied as a private apartment. In a few moments the miner turned to me, and asked if he could go into this room to fit the clothes he had selected. I answered "Yes," without even looking at him, or knowing what he had picked out. Being in one constant rush of business that morning, I completely forgot all about this man after he went into the room. In two or three hours afterwards I stepped from the store to help to unload a wagon bringing in new goods. When I returned I was surprised to find an almost elegantly dressed gentleman standing in the store, waiting for me. I supposed he had just come in, and yet I was puzzled as to how he could have passed me at the store door. He was dressed far better than it was usual for any one to dress in San Francisco at that time. He had on a handsome black coat and brown pants and vest, a handsome white shirt with black necktie, a pair of fine boots, a nice new hat, though not a stovepipe, yet a stylish one compared to the usual miner's slouched hat. He was newly and neatly shaved.

I saluted him with considerable deference, but of course with evident wonderment in my manner, for I was puzzling myself to think where the mischief such a man could come from. The stranger, I thought, half smiled, but answered my salutation and inquiry as to what I could do for him, by saying: "Nothing, thank you; I merely stepped in to ask the way to the Postoffice." "Oh," I said, "I suppose you have just arrived; what ship did you come in? I did not know we had had an arrival this morning." "I came across the plains," said my visitor. I looked at him from head to foot, but for the life of me I could not make him out. I said to myself: "How on earth did this fellow get into the store, and I not see him;" but, giving it up as a California riddle, I gave him the direction to the Postoffice. He bowed, and thanked me with uncommon cordiality, adding, while he reached

out his hand, that he hoped some day to be able to show his sense of the favor I had done him. I took his hand and looked at him, completely mystified. As he shook my hand he continued, with a laughing expression in his handsome eyes: "Oh, by the way, did you see a rough looking fellow, one of those red-shirted miners, come this way this morning? He 101 wanted to get a new pair of pants. I thought he might have have bought them at your store. He is a friend of mine. I must be off to join him; so good-by." And he turned slowly to leave. For the first time the rough, red-shirted miner I had told to go into the room came into my mind. "Why, yes," I said: "I do recollect now." "Oh, you do recollect such a fellow, then?" "Can it be possible?" said I, as the whole truth flashed on my mind. "Yes, that hat is of our stock. That coat, those pants are ours. That pair of boots are of our extra fine ones." We now both went into a hearty fit of laughing, from which we did not recover for some minutes. It appeared that while I was engaged in waiting on other customers, this miner had selected a full suit from head to foot, and when he went into the room he found water, soap and razor, all ready to his hand, so he just went to work and completely metamorphosed himself, while I had forgotten him altogether. We went together to the room where he had dressed, and from under his clothes he drew a buckskin sack, containing five thousand dollars in gold-dust. After weighing out the price of his clothes he tied up the sack and deposited it in our safe. I found that he was from the State of Virginia, and that he and his brother had come across the plains some months before, stopped at the first placer mine they had come to, and made this amount. He had come down to San Francisco for his letters from home, and to make some purchases as a matter of speculation in the mines. He was some twenty-three years of age, a perfect gentleman, and well educated. After a talk with me, he went for his letters to the Postoffice, and soon came back with a large package from father, mother, sisters, and brothers. So far as he had read they were all well, and he was in fine spirits. He retired to our private room to read them. On his reappearance, I feared he had found bad news, as his eyes were red and he looked flushed. "No, no," said he; "they are all first rate, and a favorite sister has married a dear friend of ours; but a fellow who has been away off in the mountains and plains, as I have, without having had a word from home, cannot get such letters as these and be a stick or a stone, you know." We continued fast friends while he remained in the State; that was until 1854, when he returned home with a handsome fortune made in business in the interior.

As to the female portion of the inhabitants of San Francisco, in July, 1849, we found many nice families already here. Some 102 had come overland, some from Oregon, among whom Governor Burnett's charming family was remarkable. That family of children, then so interesting to us '49ers, stand to-day, deservedly, first among the first in social position, an honor to the noble mother who never faltered in courage and devotion, amid all the privations of a pioneer life. Some families had come by ships that had reached there before ours, notably the Architect, from New Orleans; the Grey Hound and Grey Eagle, from Baltimore and Philadelphia; some, long before, in the Brooklyn, from New York, and some who had come with Colonel Stevenson's New York volunteers; some from the Sandwich Islands, and some from Chile; notably among those from the last named was the accomplished family of Doctor Poett, no small addition to our society, the eldest daughter soon becoming the wife of Mr. Wm. D. M. Howard, one of our most prominent old-time pioneers. In all these I only refer to American or European families; but, besides the American ladies of good family, there were at that time several families of the first respectability who were natives of Chile, though it is to be regretted that many of those left the State a few years later and returned to Chile. From this it will be seen that we had quite a good beginning for a family circle in July, '49. The American lady who, perhaps, drew the most attention at that time in all San Francisco was the wife of Frank Ward. Mr. Ward was then the foremost merchant in San Francisco. Mrs. Ward came with her husband from New York; I think in the latter part of 1848. She was of one of the very first families of her native State. She was young, beautiful and most charming in her manners. She was self-sacrificing and unremitting in her attentions to other American ladies, who were then arriving every day. But soon came the sad news that Mrs. Ward was dangerously sick, to be followed quickly with the mournful tidings of her death. The death of twenty of her first male citizens would not have made San Francisco half so lonesome and sad as did the death of this one loved and valued lady. Mr. Ward then lived in, for those days, a handsome house on the corner of Stockton and Green streets, the same Mr. Plume, the banker, afterward occupied. The house stands there yet, and I never pass the spot without drawing a sigh in sorrow for the early death of that pioneer lady; and, as I look at the door, I can in imagination again see her smile of hearty welcome to us newcomers of '49. From this time out 103 families increased rapidly, making the place feel like our old accustomed American home. A little later began to appear in our streets excessively

dressed women of another class. At first they were few in number, but in 1850 they became very numerous, and made themselves conspicuous in every way they could, They were every day to be seen on horseback in twos, fours, and sometimes sixes. Men living by gambling and politics did not hesitate to consort openly with them. At the opening of 1851 there was, perhaps, *one* woman of this class for every *nineteen* well-conducted women in San Francisco; certainly not more than that proportion. Yet they made themselves so conspicuous and kept themselves so constantly on parade that one just arriving in the city might get the idea that the proportion of the bad to the good was much larger. These lost creatures were the only class of women known to the authors of the “Annals,” it should appear from their book. The virtuous wives, daughters and sisters of '49ers, who were from morning until late at night hard at work at their household duties, seldom having time for even a visit to each other, they ignore altogether, and leave the impression that there was no such class of pioneers. There was very little furniture to be had at that time in San Francisco. This gave our lady friends a great deal of trouble; but it was surprising how ingeniously they managed to overcome the difficulty, and make their tents, shanties or houses look neatly furnished with the few articles they were able to obtain. One evening I called on a lady friend—a Mrs. T.—who lived in a little shanty that stood in the sand hills above Kearny street, *in* California street, then unopened. Everything was as neat as a baby house, and I was surprised to see in the apartment they called the “sitting room” what looked like a handsome sofa, covered with brown linen in the neatest style. I could not help saying: “Where did you get that sofa, Mrs. T.?” “Oh, that is a secret,” she said, while she and her husband both laughed. The husband then said: “I am prouder of that sofa than if it came from New York's most fashionable furniture store.” As he spoke he showed me that the sofa was contrived out of a long box saddlery had been imported in. In a few evenings after this I called on another lady friend, a Mrs. W., a girl yet in years. When we were eating a supper of her cooking I told the story of Mrs. T.'s sofa. “Well,” said Mr. W., “please look at my wife's work—the ottoman you are seated on.” I did so, and found it 104 was fashioned out of a sugar barrel cut down and covered with carpet, making it look like a handsome ottoman, that would have passed in any room. Such, my young readers, were your mothers—the women of '49. Patient, frugal, unselfish and hard working, you cannot be too proud of them.

Afterwards, in 1853 and '54, when ladies came to join their husbands in California, they found handsome houses elegantly furnished, all ready for them to walk into and enjoy, yet many of them grumbled and growled at everything. "There was too much wind in San Francisco," "too few amusements," "the walking was bad on account of the sand." And so it was with everything, until some of them actually went off home—or East, for there was no home for them any more—thus permanently breaking up their families. When I observed this, and thought of the women of '49, I could not help repeating Scott's lines: "O, woman, in our hours of ease, Uncertain, coy, and hard to please, And variable as the shade By the light quivering aspen made, When pain and anguish wring the brow A ministering angel thou!"

On Sundays, in '49 and '50, I often took great pleasure in visiting the churches of the various denominations, just to see what progress we were making in the all-important point of obtaining a worthy female population; and I used to find myself perfectly astonished at the fast increase of both women and children. Their universal attendance at church was, too, a striking feature of the women of '49. Every woman and child in San Francisco, not sick in bed, it seemed to me, attended some church on Sunday, in the forenoon at least. Of course I do not allude to the abandoned class when I say this. A pleasing picture, too, of religious progress in San Francisco at that time was the total absence of sectarian bitterness, which too often obstructs the progress of true religion in other countries, and, in fact, even in our Eastern States. The clergymen, of all denominations, in San Francisco—Protestant, Catholic and Jewish—worked, each in his own way, like a band of brothers, ever ready to praise and commend each other on all proper occasions. Shoulder to shoulder, they worked, warring *only* on vice and immorality. Yet these were the men the "Annals" tell us "elbowed their way to the gaming table, and unblushingly 105 threw down their gold or silver stake." Of course there is not a shadow of truth in such a statement.

This good-will between religious people and the untiring activity and zeal of the women, accounts for the wonderful prosperity of the churches of the various denominations in San Francisco, that I have before drawn attention to.

In July, '49, there was no regular law authority in any part of California. There were Alcaldes, who executed, in old times, an arbitrary authority, but when the Americans came flocking in great numbers, the Alcaldes became loth to claim or exercise much authority. So the people in their primary capacity dealt out justice and decided all disputes, recognizing no appeal to any higher tribunal. This was not like the Vigilance Committee business of after years. This was the action of the *whole* people, made necessary by the want of organized law in the land. The good and conservative men of the community were all there, to guide and temper the action of the hasty and reckless. The difficulty with Vigilance Committees is, that most of the cool, wise heads among the people will not join them, and all the bad elements of the community are sure to be foremost in them. The consequence is, their acts have often been cruel and unjust. There is not a county, perhaps, in the whole State, where a cruel murder—and in some cases more than one—has not been committed by the action of Vigilance Committees. Before the meeting of the first Legislature in San Jose, I never knew an act of injustice done by the people, when assembled to deal out punishment for crime. Since that time I hardly ever knew of the action of a Vigilance Committee that could be wholly approved by a conservative man. It was wonderful how well we got on in '49, without any sort of government beyond the universally sanctioned action of the people, and I have often since questioned, in my own mind, if we would not have got on just the same ever since, and saved all the money we have paid out for thieving legislation and selfish office-holders. But the gentlemen loafers who wanted the offices could not stand it, so they began to make such a fuss for a State government that Governor Riley had to call the Monterey Convention. Since then we have been tied hand and foot, to be picked by office-holders at their leisure.

For awhile in '49 we were disturbed by the well-remembered organization called the Hounds; but these fellows were disposed 106 of in one day, never again to show themselves, by the united action and fiat of the whole people. In July, 1849, they were in the zenith of their power in San Francisco. They mostly consisted of the worthless members of Col. Stevenson's regiment of New York volunteers, who had been disbanded in Monterey in 1848. They lived by gambling, and they dressed in a flashy, ridiculous style, white vests embroidered beautifully, showy silk neckties, fine cloth coats and pants, the coats often lined with red silk. They gave out that they had taken San

San Francisco under their protection and were a volunteer police force. On Sundays they paraded the streets with a band of music. Idlers and loafers from among the newcomers joined them, and their numbers looked formidable when on parade. We were all more or less afraid of them, as they were responsible to no one but themselves for their actions, and it was impossible to have confidence in them, for in the main they were scalawags of the first water. From the way the Hounds are spoken of in the “Annals” you would suppose they were a band of robbers from whom no one's property was safe. This was not so. They never *stole*, or were even suspected of it. If any American, man or woman, was wronged, he or she would find protection by making application to them. They were cruel and severe towards all but their own countrymen when they undertook to deal out punishment for transgressions of any sort. Though we were every day getting more and more afraid of this volunteer police, as they pretended to be, no one made a movement against them. First, because we did not know our own strength at that time, and, secondly, because every one had too much of his own private business on hand to make it at all prudent or safe for him to meddle in any business of a public nature; so the Hounds were allowed full swing in regulating, as they called it, the government of the city. It was their practice to walk into any store they wished and select such articles as suited their fancy and walk off without paying for them, saying as they left: “This is all right; we will see that your place and property are protected.” As matters stood no one dared to object, and so we continued, until one Sunday an American sailor was badly beaten in a row with some Chilenos. At that time there were a large number of Chilenos living in the part of the city known as Clark's Point, and it was here the sailor was beaten. He made his complaint to the Hounds. At once the whole gang 107 went to this locality to take revenge. They made an indiscriminate attack upon the whole nationality, tearing down their houses and committing all sorts of excesses. Among the houses destroyed was one occupied by an old man, his wife and a beautiful young daughter. This family was known to several prominent citizens to be good and virtuous in their lives, and were much respected. The Hounds destroyed the house and scattered its contents in the street. Then they took the screaming, frightened young girl, carried her off, and when the unfortunate parents found her she was a swollen corpse from brutality fiends could not rival. This terribly appalling crime seemed to fill the whole atmosphere of San Francisco. Every one appeared to know it almost immediately. Men trembled and sickened, as in a low voice they talked

it over to each other. The Hounds themselves seemed to know that there was a cry of vengeance in the very air, for the next morning it was found that many of the worst of them had fled, never again to be seen in San Francisco. Then came the famous meeting of citizens on the Plaza, the first mass meeting ever held in San Francisco. At the hour named in the call every man in the city seemed there. We were all pleased and astonished at our numbers. A volunteer police force was at once established on a good basis, and such of the Hounds as could be found were arrested, tried and banished or placed on board a United States man-of-war, then in port, to be used by the commander as sailors and turned loose at some foreign port. This closed the career of the Hounds in San Francisco. It was their first and last outrage, but its devilish wickedness showed the true character of the band, and we all felt the greatest relief at their complete suppression.

From the account given of us by the “Annals” you would suppose dishonesty and thieving were characteristic of our whole community from the first day the American immigration began to pour into San Francisco to the day their book was put forth. I assure my readers that never was a more false representation made, for the truth is, that all through '49 and until the mid-Summer months of 1850 there was no such thing known as a theft, either large or small, in San Francisco. Merchants did not fear to leave their goods exposed in the most careless way in their canvas-walled houses and tents, while they went to church or to walk over the hills on Sundays, a common practice with us all in '49 and '50. Even our gold was left in our tents, where it could be easily found if looked for, without the least apprehension for its safety. Nor, in all that time, did we lose a dollar's worth of either goods or gold. No; nor did I ever hear of an insult being offered to a virtuous woman. Yet the “Annals” represent that robberies and outrages were so common that no lady could live with safety in San Francisco.

In the late summer months of 1850, the Sydney immigration began to pour into San Francisco. Then a change came; for London's best educated house-robbers found unsuspecting San Francisco an easy place in which to practice their old tricks, and they were not slow to improve so inviting a field. Our officials were engaged altogether in plundering the city of its landed property and the treasury of every dollar paid into it by the taxpayers, so they took no notice of these Sydney thieves, or, if they did arrest one occasionally, he was sure to be acquitted. This state of things continued,

only getting from bad to worse, until February, 1851, at which time all the well-disposed business inhabitants of the city became sensible that something must be done, or that they must abandon the city to the office-holders and Sydney thieves, who seemed to be in collusion to rob and murder us all. Many urged the formation of Vigilance Committee, to be composed of the best citizens, for the sole object of helping the well-disposed officers of the law to bring criminals to justice, or to expose and bring to punishment the law officers who neglected or refused to do their duty; but men of the Sam Brannan stamp called for violence and blood, and in the temper of the people they found a large number of their way of thinking. So the famous Vigilance Committee of 1851 was formed. Many did not join the Committee, yet did not say much against it, as they hardly knew what was best under the circumstances. In their very first move, if they had followed Sam Brannan's advice, urged in many speeches, they would have hanged a man named Burdue, who was perfectly innocent of the charge made against him. Luckily, however, there were many men of cool judgment and high moral standing in the Committee, who checked the wild, reckless element led on by Brannan and such men. This saved the Committee from a terrible mistake. The proceedings of the Committee were generally moderate and conducted with decency and decorum, and all they did was approved of by a large majority of the people, up to the Sunday on which they took Whittaker and McKenzie from the County Jail and hanged 109 them in the way they did; for brutal levity characterized the whole proceeding at the place of execution, which shocked the thinking, law-abiding members of the community. Three-fourths of the people of San Francisco denounced the whole proceeding as unnecessary and unwarrantable. The morning after the execution great numbers who had heretofore subscribed liberally to the funds of the Committee refused to pay another dollar. From that day the Committee was virtually abolished. That frightful, bloody scene was their last appearance in public, for they had lost the confidence of the community. The Brannan crowd struggled for a while to keep themselves before the public, but public opinion drove them out of sight. There were hundreds of men who connected themselves with this Vigilance Committee, either by giving money to its treasury or by direct personal service, that did so with the utmost reluctance, and regretted that they were, as they conscientiously believed, compelled to do as they did. This sort of men, when the Committee disbanded, wanted as little said about it as possible. They said: "If, on the whole, we have done good, all right. We took a fearful responsibility on ourselves; let no one ever

follow our example and do the like. If your officials become wicked, reform them within the laws and constitution. Our government, with its frequent elections, is formed with that view. Be a little patient; in the end it will be far better than a Vigilance Committee.”

The doings of this '51 Vigilance Committee give material for a chapter in the history of California's great city that it were far better was never written; or, if written, the task should have been left to the pen of some truthful, conservative historian. But, instead of that, we find it written up in the “Annals” in the same glowing, irreligious, piratical style that pervades the whole book from cover to cover. The result of the proceedings of the Committee was undoubtedly to bring a sense of safety to the inhabitants of the city and a relief from a position that was intolerable. But it was that sort of a feeling of safety that one might have who, to escape the grasp of a grizzly bear, flies to the protection of a wild bull. While the grizzly is in sight, the bull is an agreeable companion; but, alas, what a fearful position to be in when the bull has driven the bear out of sight! This illustration is fair, because it is found out of the question to conduct the operations of a Vigilance Committee without the active aid of the lowest and worst elements of the community, and these elements always get the upper hand and run the Committee to serve their own purposes. In this case, though the Committee did the good I name, it at the same time did incalculable injury to the State. It checked the immigration of good and solid men from the older States to ours, particularly of families. Capital, always sensitive, shrank away in fear from our shores. The many law-abiding people of other States and lands, who had begun to send large sums of money to San Francisco for investment, at once countermanded their orders, and turned away their eyes from a State where it was evident anarchy was possible, if not probable, at any moment. If those really worthy men, who had sanctioned the formation of this Vigilance Committee and supported it with their money, had spent half that money and given half the personal attention they gave in controlling the action of the Committee to bring about a reformation in the administration of the laws of the State, they would have effected ten times the good, and, instead of repelling capital and immigration, they would have invited a vast increase of both. The formation of the Committee was like sending forth the declaration, which was untrue in fact, that we were unable to live like other civilized communities, under laws framed by ourselves. This, of course, could not but retard our progress in every way. No

good man who had connected himself with the committee wanted himself paraded as an actor in its doings. Such men joined it with great reluctance, as I have already said, and wanted it forgotten as soon as possible. But the authors of the “Annals” drag them all out to view by name, besmearing them with laudations and exhibiting them in woodcuts as all crowded around Sam Brannan and men of his stamp, with their mouths open in wondering admiration at his reckless, lawless harangues they report as made at public meetings called by the Committee. They go yet further, and have woodcuts of the hanging of the wretches who were executed by the Committee inserted in their book. Recollect that this book, the “Annals,” was dedicated to the “California Pioneers,” and the dedication was understood to be acceptable to them. This fact undoubtedly indorsed the Vigilance Committee of '51 in all its parts by that society.

What was the consequence of this? In the first place, all the small, weak-minded men who saw themselves paraded in the 111 pages of the “Annals” as the heroes whose self-sacrificing deeds the authors of the “Annals” felt bound to rescue from oblivion, became puffed up, and now boasted of what before they had taken care to keep to themselves. The really good men, who saw themselves paraded with unasked and unwished-for praise, did not think it prudent to bring on any discussion by repudiating what they in sorrow had deemed themselves obliged to do in that trying time. This begat a very widespread feeling that a Vigilance Committee was a first-rate mode of reforming abuses. The restless loafers of the community, who longed once more for the handling of other people's money and for a brief notoriety that they could not get in any other way, lost no opportunity of urging the renewed action of the Vigilance Committee, or of the formation of a new one. In this they failed for a long time, and San Francisco began to feel the good effects of the restored confidence of the outside world. Suddenly, in 1856, an event occurred which again dashed back our prosperity and clouded over the fair name we had begun to recover with a darker shadow than had yet fallen on it. James King of Wm., a gentleman of the highest character, universally esteemed and respected by all who knew him, had commenced the publication of the *Evening Bulletin* as a reform paper. He had but little experience as a journalist, and attacked corruption in office in such a rough, violent way that he defeated his own object and made the man attacked seem the object of personal persecution by the editor. However, King was regarded by the well-disposed

of the community as their champion, and they urged him on and promised him protection from actions at law or otherwise, until he almost challenged and seemed to seek personal encounter in the streets. The result was that in January, 1856, he was assassinated, or, as some prefer to say, killed in the streets by a man of the name of Casey, whom he had attacked in his paper. Had the *Evening Bulletin* then been conducted with the judgement and ability we now see displayed in that same paper, how different might have been the result, for its noble, uncompromising war on the villainies of the day would not, in that case, have endangered the life of its great reform editor, and he would have lived to do the city and whole State incalculable services. As it was, he was struck down in his usefulness, and his young life lost to us. His death brought into life the old Vigilance Committee, the dead body of which had been so carefully embalmed by the authors of the "Annals." The merits and demerits of this new movement is a sore subject to discuss, in San Francisco, to this very day, though more than twenty years have elapsed since the second Vigilance Committee was disbanded. The death of Mr. King was universally regretted, and the whole people felt it as a terrible outrage, and if, in this excitement, the man Casey had been hanged within an hour after his capture, no one would have been surprised, and not a grumble would have been heard; but in an evil hour the Vigilance Committee was reorganized; they captured the city, defied all law, and commenced to deal out what they called justice. Many good men of course there were, who joined them, but nothing to the good men who refused. The Brannan stamp of men were of course leaders in this second Vigilance Committee, and before long every rough and scalawag in the city was on their side, but even with all this they would have been unable to maintain themselves a week in power, but that it so happened that, a few months before this time, some twelve hundred Frenchmen had been landed in San Francisco, who were banished from France on account of riotous conduct in Paris. In banishing them the French Government had given them a free passage to their choice of countries, and, unfortunately for us, they chose our State. The Vigilance Committee organized many of these Frenchmen into a sort of a standing army. A fort was erected, partly of stuffed gunny bags. It was of considerable strength, and was known as "Fort Gunny Bag." With this French army and the fort as a prison house, the Committee found no difficulty in maintaining their authority. What all this was for no one could explain, for in the state of intense hate that sprung up between what was known as the "Vigilantes" and the "Law-and-Order" men, no reform of a lasting character

was possible. Johnson, the Governor of the State, was called on by the inhabitants to disband the Committee; but he was a weak man, with neither the courage nor ability to face the difficulty. He responded by the usual proclamation, and notified the county militia to hold themselves in readiness in case he should need their services. At the same time he announced that the command of the State forces was to be given to General (then Captain) Wm. T. Sherman.

Everywhere in the country preparations began to be made to respond to the Governor's call, when suddenly it was announced that Captain Sherman had thrown up the command, and that 113 Governor Johnson had some negotiations with the Vigilance Committee, in which they outwitted him. This brought such contempt on the legally constituted authorities that almost everybody proclaimed himself a "Vigilante." The Committee continued in power nearly all Summer, hanging and banishing every one they saw fit to hang or banish. They established a kind of inquisition, through which, by secret trials, many acts of tyranny and oppression were committed. At length, their funds failed them, and they were obliged to send adrift the Paris ruffians and give up the fort. So ended the second Vigilance Committee, leaving heartburnings and hates on both sides, that smolder even now in the breasts of many. General Sherman at first accepted the command offered by the Governor, but suddenly resigned. The general public did not know his reason for this resignation, and the Law-and-Order men found great fault with him; but in his "Memoirs," recently published, he explains fully and in the most satisfactory manner all about his resignation of that command, from which it appears that it was impossible for him to have done otherwise than resign, after General Wool had broken his promise and refused to give the necessary arms for the use of the State forces. Yes; the second Vigilance Committee is dead. Let no one write its history. The sooner it is forgotten the better. The fruits were dissensions and hates in the community; a destruction of all business for a long period; the discouragement of immigration to our State, and the spread throughout the whole State of a disrespect for the laws, from which we have not recovered to this day. As we look back on it for good results, we cannot see even the shadow of one compared to the misfortunes it brought upon us. Notwithstanding all this, many—very many—good and true men stood by it to the last. The recollection of the first Vigilance Committee in the minds of the people who lived in San Francisco at that time is altogether different. That Committee was supported

in power by no French outlaws. The first act they did that was disapproved of by the community caused them to disband. It all comes to this: Either let us have no constitution and laws, and leave the people, as they were in '49, to govern themselves in their primary capacity; or, if we do have a constitution and laws, let us never, under any circumstances, sanction their violation, as a means of temporary relief. Either form of government might do, but the two systems 114 cannot work together, for the reason to which I have before drawn your attention.

It was truly wonderful how obedient the people of '49 were to the edicts of the despotic Alcaldes they themselves had placed in power in all the mining camps and small communities throughout the State. If an Emperor, surrounded by powerful armies, had placed these Alcaldes in power, the obedience to their fiats could not have been more complete, while it certainly would not have been half so cheerfully yielded. Let me relate in the next chapter a little incident that helps to illustrate this.

CHAPTER X.

BILL LIDDLE—A DANGEROUS PASS IN THE MOUNTAINS—OLD KATE's INTELLIGENCE—THE MEETING IN THE PASS—VALOR OF OLD KATE—THE DISCOMFITED CONDUCTOR—THE TRIAL AND THE ALCALDE's DECISION—COMPARISON BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW METHODS OF SETTling DISPUTES—LIFE OF A POLITICIAN—A CABINET MINISTER's ADVICE TO A YOUNG APPLICANT FOR A POSITION.

In 1849, I owned a pack train of eight large American mules. They were in charge of a conductor of the name of Bill Liddle. Bill had them on the American river, packing merchandise for a trader in the northern mines. In one case he loaded his train heavily and started for a mining camp far in the interior. On this trip he was obliged to pass along a dangerous trail of some two miles in length. It was cut into the side of a rugged cliff that overhung the river. It was just wide enough for a loaded mule or horse to walk on safely, with the cliff on one side and a fearful precipice on the other. Bill started his train in on this pass, with old Kate, a heavy, square-built bay mule, as usual, on the lead.

Old Kate was a favorite with us all. Bill used to insist that she understood English just as well as he did, and he always addressed her as if he was sincere in this assertion, and I was often forced to laugh at the wonderful intelligence she showed in obeying him. Sometimes, when he turned her loose in the corral and went away, she would come to the stable door, unlatch it herself, proceed directly to a bin where Bill kept barley in sacks, raise the cover, take out a sack, set it up on one end, rip the sewing as neatly as Bill could, and then stand quietly feeding out of it until she was discovered. On these occasions Bill would shake his head, and exclaim: "I wonder who Kate is. Oh! I wish I knew, for of course she is some famous woman, condemned to live on earth as a mule."

On the day I speak of, Bill had not advanced more than a quarter of a mile on the narrow trail, riding quietly behind his train, 116 when he was startled by hearing a loud bray from Kate, and in a moment all the mules were standing still. Bill now looked ahead and saw that a return, unloaded train of fifteen California mules was approaching from the other direction on a jog trot. It was impossible for Bill to turn his mules around with their loads on, and there was no room to unload; nor was there room for the mules of the two trains to pass without almost sure destruction. Bill raised himself in his saddle and in a furious voice called on the other conductor to stop his train. This he did, but told Bill that he would not go back on the trail, because it was two miles to the end of the cliff, and Bill would lose only a few hundred yards by going back. Bill explained the impossibility of turning his large American mules with their heavy packs, or of unloading them on such a narrow trail. All this while old Kate stood right in the center of the trail, her forelegs well apart, as if to brace herself. Her nose dropped lower than usual, and her long, heavy ears were thrown forward as if aimed at the head mule of the other train, while her large, bright eyes were fixed on the animal's motions. "Well," said the conductor of the California mules, "I don't care a d—, I will not go back; I am too infernal tired, and I am willing to take my chances. It is your place to go back, and if I lose a mule you will have to pay for it."

Bill protested, but there was no use. The conductor swore and talked, and then, cracking his whip, called out to his lead mule: "Get up, Sal! take the rocks; take the inside. The right hand is ours by law. Make a dash, old gal, and go ahead!" Then he gave a loud halloo and again cracked his whip for an advance. His mules seemed to know that there was danger. Sal, the leader, hugged close

to the rocks, and made an excited rush forward to get inside Kate. Up to this time Kate had never moved a muscle, and stood just in the center of the trail as at first. Bill feared for a moment that she did not see the danger of letting Sal get inside of her, and, again raising himself in his saddle, called out at the top of his voice: "Kate, my girl, go for them; pitch them all, and the driver with them, to h—l!" Before Bill's order was fairly past his lips Kate gave an unearthly bray, as if in answer; at the same time she dropped on her knees, with her head stretched out close along the rocks, her neck and lower jaw rubbing the trail, and received Sal across her neck. In a second more poor Sal was high in the air, and then soused heavily into the river below. Kate, keeping her kneeling position, rushed on for the next mule, which she sent on to follow Sal. The Californians now huddled back close together in fear of the kneeling monster before them, but their driver, maddened by his loss, hallooed and whipped them on. He was in hopes that by a sudden and furious rush they could be made to leap and dash over Kate, and then he had no fears but that he would dislodge the rest of the train and get even for his loss. But he did not know Kate, or he never would have tried such a desperate game. Bill continued to halloo: "Well done, my beauty! Down with them, Kate! Down with every last one of them, driver and all!"

In a minute, one, two and three more of the Californians were on their headlong way to the river. The remainder now sat back with a sullen determination not to move a step forward, which neither swearing, hallooing nor whips could shake. Kate now arose to her feet and took her old position just as before, with her ominous ears dropped forward as though nothing had happened. "Well," said the discomfited conductor, "I will go back, but when we get out of this trail you and I will settle accounts." Bill made no reply, but waited patiently while the conductor turned his mules one by one on the narrow trail, and started back with five less than he had on meeting Bill's train. Bill examined his revolver; it was all right. He drew his knife from the sheath; it was all right. The moment they emerged from the cliff, Bill took his revolver in hand, and, driving his spurs into his horse, was in a moment face to face with the loser of the mules, saying, with perfect coolness: "Shall we settle this business here, or shall we go before the Alcalde of the next diggings?" Without answering at once, the man addressed took a good look into Bill's quiet, almost stolid face, and, appearing to think that Bill meant business, he answered: "Damn me, if you have not got a great look of that she-

devil of a mule of yours that threw mine down down the cliff! Are you and she any blood relations that you know of?" Not at all offended, Bill answered: "I cannot say positively that we are, but one thing I can say, I would rather be a full brother to a mule that would act as Kate did to-day, than a forty-second cousin to a man that would act as you did." "Well, well," said the other, "put up your damned revolver, and let us settle matters before the Alcalde. His camp is only half a mile farther back, so I will just leave my mules here to pick grass, and go on with you." They now rode side by side, and talked as though they were good friends. They soon reached the miners' camp, and found the Alcalde down in a shaft he was sinking for the purpose of prospecting his claim deeper. It was old John Spruce, well known in early days on the Sacramento river. The mule drivers asked him to come up, but he said that was unnecessary, as they could just tell him the case and he would decide it at once. He then took a large bucket he and his partner had been using to elevate the earth out of the shaft, and, turning it upside down, sat on it. He then took a cigar from his vest pocket, lit it, and commenced smoking, leaning his back against the wall of the shaft. He folded his arms across his breast, and told the windlass-man, his partner, to go and get his Bible, the only one in the diggings. When it was brought he told Bill to take it. The Alcalde then repeated the oath to him, and Bill assented and kissed the book. The other conductor did the same, and then, lying forward on the windlass, looking down on the Alcalde, he made his complaint against Bill, and stated the facts very clearly, asking that Bill be adjudged to owe and pay him six hundred dollars, five hundred for the mules and one hundred for the pack-saddles lost with them. Bill now took his place at the windlass and made his statement, and the case was submitted. The Alcalde took the cigar from his mouth, and, looking up at the two men, gave his decision in these words: "My friends, I find for the defendant. The driver of the unloaded mules acted outrageously in trying to pass the American mules while heavily loaded on that narrow trail, that I know so well. If he had made such an attempt without himself losing heavily, and with loss to the opposite party, I would have given heavy damages against him. As it is, I dismiss the case and order plaintiff to pay the costs of Court, which are only one ounce." Here the Alcalde rose, turned up his bucket, and commenced to shovel away to fill it. As he worked on, he told the plaintiff to go to a store kept by one Meyer, not far off, and weigh out the ounce of dust and leave it there for him. This was done without hesitation. Bill went

along and stood the treats, and paid for a bottle of the best brandy Meyer had, to be given in the evening to the Alcalde and his partner as they returned from their work.

So terminated a claim that now-a-days would probably reach the Supreme Court for a final decision, after the amount in dispute 119 had been spent three times over in law fees. Who can blame us '49ers for sometimes sighing for the days when we had neither constitution nor Legislature, and when the people always acted honestly in their primary capacity. As I have before stated, in '49 there was no such thing as stealing or attempts at fraud. Every one seemed to act with honor, one with another. Of course there were exceptions to all this, but the exceptions were truly very few. Our troubles came with the advent of the office-holders and office-hunters, of courts and legislatures, forced on us, at least two years too soon, by hungry politicians who came here, not to work or pursue a legitimate business, but to live as such men can only live, by scheming and plundering the public crib. These were the men the “Annals” call the “first and most respectable citizens of the State,” who “could wait no longer.”

In anything I have said I do not want to give the impression that I am, in fact, in favor of having no organized State government, but when I look back to our condition here in '49, and I may include most of 1850, I feel proud of the conduct, taken as a whole, of the first immigrants to California. If it had been such as described by the “Annals,” I would have felt that our American institutions were a terrible failure, and wholly incapable of producing a great and noble people, who could govern themselves in all, and under all circumstances. I have shown how comfortably we got on without an organized government, with nothing but our early training to guide us on, to show that we were not recreant to that early training, but most faithful to it, and fully alive to its meaning. I will ask my young readers to let me here digress for the purpose of saying a word to induce them to enlist in the cause of reform, so much needed in the administration of our State government. When you find yourself in a position of influence or power to do it, abolish every office in the whole State it is possible to do without, and curtail every expenditure it is possible to curtail without injury to the State. Open the way for the offices you do retain to women, old men and the maimed. In this way you will check the mania for office holding and hunting—a reform worth working for. This mania is the ruin of all young men who yield to it. Such a young man, let his talents be ever so promising,

becomes a dissembler, a sneak, a sycophant; he becomes an adept in political wire-pulling. He does not dare to express an honest political opinion of his own. In all things he must follow the lead of the party or man who put him in office. He performs the duties of that office with the constant fear that tomorrow his bread and butter will be cut off. He sacrifices not only his independence of action and thought, but his very man-hood. If he is successful in holding office for many years in his life, what is the result when at length he is dismissed, as he surely will be, sooner or later? Why, the best years of his life are gone forever, and he is, most likely, poor and shunned by all.

From my own observations, I tell you truly, my young readers, that I would sooner see a son of mine take the position of hodcarrier for a start in life, if that were necessary, than that he should take the best paying clerkship in any government office, either State or National, or any of the petty county offices. If you are surprised at what I say, just get some one who can remember for twenty years back to give you the history of the office holders of your own county, whatever county that may be, and after you have it I think you will adopt my views of office-holding for young men. With women the case is otherwise, and so it is with men who have accomplished the main battle of their lives, or are physically debarred from the usual avocations of men. I will conclude this digression from the object of my book by giving you and extract from a Washington letter I found in the *Call* a few weeks ago, as it is just in point:

“A LIVING TOMB.”

[H. V. Redfield's Washington Letter.]

All the heads of the bureaus try to discourage young men from entering the departments, as it is a life without a future. The other day I heard a Cabinet minister talking to a young chap who wanted a place.

“My young friend,” said he, “don't apply. You may not be able to pass an examination; this would be mortifying. Save your money and your patience, and go home. Saw wood, drive cows, anything honorable; but preserve your independence. A clerkship here is no qualification for anything. Not

one in ten saves a dollar. It is an expensive place to live. Board is high and the weather hot. I have a man in my department who has been in forty years.”

“Forty years?”

“Yes, every day of it. He came in 1826. Well, he gets about the same salary that he did to commence with. The other day he came to me saying, ‘I ought to have died forty years ago.’ ‘You don't mean that,’ said I. ‘Yes,’ said he; ‘I mean that I have been buried in this building forty years, and I might as well have been buried in my grave. What's the difference between 121 tombs? Of what advantage to myself have I been here? I had nothing when I came in and have nothing now. I am disqualified for anything. If I was turned out to-day I would starve to-morrow.’ So much for a government position that you young men are so anxious to get. They'd better let it alone.”

Yes; strictly speaking, this chapter is all a digression, but the subject came naturally and forcibly in view, while drawing to mind the good old times of the pioneers, when we had no State government to care for us or State taxes to grind us down. I do not exactly advocate going back to that condition, but I do advocate going three-quarters of the way back, and then we will have enough, and more than enough, of government left for all practical purposes. Do not fear, boys of California, sons of the pioneers, to strike boldly for such reforms, and be sure your success will be a glory to your native State.

CHAPTER XI.

STRANGE RECOGNITIONS—STOLEN MONEY RETURNED—MONTEREY—
HOSPITALITY OF ITS INHABITANTS—ITS DECAY—A FANDANGO—DON DAVID
SPENSE AND DON JUAN COOPER—MEETING OF OLD FRIENDS—TALBOT H. GREEN
—HIS GENEROSITY—REFUSAL OF NOMINATIONS FOR UNITED STATES SENATOR
AND MAYOR—HIS MARRIAGE—RECOGNITION BY A LADY—THE DEMOCRATIC
CONVENTION—GREEN's IDENTIFICATION AS AN ABSCONDER—DENIAL OF THE
CHARGE—HIS DEPARTURE FROM SAN FRANCISCO—SUBSEQUENT CAREER.

Many strange and curious recognitions occurred on this coast in 1849. Men supposed to be long dead were discovered living here under assumed names. I knew an instance, related to me in confidence, of this sort. In the early part of 1850 a gentleman arrived here from Cincinnati with the intention of entering into mercantile business in this State. While looking up a good location, he met an old acquaintance who, seven years before, had disappeared with ten thousand dollars of his money, entrusted to him to take to St. Louis. The absconder was then doing a flourishing business under an assumed name in San Francisco, and offered to pay the whole amount with interest, on condition of perfect secrecy being observed. This was agreed to, and half the lost money was paid down in gold, and the other half and interest was secured. The fortunate merchant took the first return steamer for his old home, satisfied with what California had done for him. The name of the discovered man was never made known to any one but to the lawyer chosen mutually by the parties to fix up the matter between them. This man always bore a good reputation in this State, married an amiable lady, is now dead, having left children and a valuable estate. It is believed that the family never knew of the one false step of the head of their house.

A more pleasing recognition was that which occurred to Don David Spense, of Monterey:

The old town of Monterey was once the most hospitable and agreeable town in the State. Thirty years ago it could boast of 123 lots of pretty girls of refinement and education, and the jolliest lot of men and women that were ever congregated together. Now, to us pioneers, it looks terribly lonesome, and the less we see of it the better we feel, for the town is decay personified, and not agreeable to contemplate for those who know that they themselves have passed the summit, and are on the shady side of life's journey. As long as Don David Spense and the good Don Juan Cooper remained of the old crowd of long ago, the place was tolerable, their hospitality was a sunlight in itself, that made things look cheerful, but since they have passed away there is a chill in all the surroundings, that Davy Jacks, who now owns the whole town, and, they say, "has it fenced in," finds it impossible to dispel. In old times, it was the invariable practice of the people of Monterey to give a grand entertainment or fandango to the officers of any war vessel that should visit their harbor, no matter what the nationality of the ship might be. Don David was always prominent on

those occasions, for he was the very personification of fun and merriment. He was a Scotchman by birth, and had left his native land while a boy in the employment of a mercantile house largely interested in the Pacific coast trade. He first came to Monterey as agent for that firm to purchase hides and tallow. He finally settled there and married a most excellent California young lady with whom he lived a long and happy life. On one occasion that an English man of war appeared in the harbor, Don David was dispatched by the inhabitants with the usual invitation to the Captain and officers to come on shore and partake of the hospitalities of the town, including, of course, a fandango. The English Commander informed Don David, after thanking him and the people of Monterey warmly for the proposed kindness, that he should have to put to sea that very night, so that an acceptance of the invitation would be an impossibility, but a general leave was given to the officers to go on shore and visit the city. The First Lieutenant now accepted a seat in Don David's boat to go on shore. As the boat glided over the water the Lieutenant thought the nationality of his new friend was plain, from the accent on his tongue. So he interrupted the conversation with: "If I am not very much mistaken, you are a countryman of mine." "I am Scotch," said Spense. "Ah, I thought so; where were you born?" "In the town of Blank." "Ah, that is my birth-place too; how strange." And now the English officer put his hand to his forehead as if in thought as he continued, while Spense looked all excitement. "Let me see, let me see; yes, I knew a widow Spense who lived there in a handsome house a long time ago—yes, and she had one son about my own age." While the Lieutenant was slowly repeating these words both men were staring full in each other's face, as if in a struggle to recall long lost memories. "Your name, Lieutenant, is—" "Is Blank," interrupted the Lieutenant. "Oh," said Spense, as he threw open his arms; "it is, it must be so; I know you now, you are the boy, who thirty-five years ago, I gave such a thrashing to for breaking my mother's window, on a Christmas morning." "The same," said the Lieutenant, and now the two strong men were locked in each other's arms in emotion that would have better become that long, long ago boyhood, they now so vividly recollected. The Commander of the man-of-war, on hearing of the recognition, concluded to remain over night, so they had the fandango, after all.

The most remarkable discovery of this nature that ever occurred in California was that in regard to Talbot H. Green, whose name will be found mixed up prominently with all early notes on

California history, but in particular with the city government of San Francisco for the first three years of its organization. In Colton's "Three Years in California" Green is referred to in this way: "Long will the good old town of Monterey lament the departure of Talbot H. Green. His enterprise and integrity as a merchant and his benevolence as a citizen were everywhere felt. The widow or the orphan ever found in him a generous friend." When the South Carolina arrived in San Francisco, in June, '49, we found Green actively engaged with all that concerned the government and regulation of the city. He had a short time previously arrived from Monterey, at which place he had for some years been connected in mercantile business with Thomas O. Larkin. He was now a member of the prosperous firm of Howard, Mellis & Co. He was a man of plain appearance, low in stature, and square built. In manners he was exceedingly friendly, kind and off-hand towards all. He seemed to be a man of sterling, good common sense, and of fine judgment. He was a good accountant, and of reasonably good education. In all the Summer of '49 he was decidedly the most popular man of all the old Californians that we found here before us. He was respected by all, and in nearly all disputes 125 between business men, some of which involved fifty and even a hundred thousand dollars, Green was chosen as one of the arbitrators, and in very many cases as *sole* arbitrator, and I cannot recall an instance where his decision was disputed or appealed from by either party. For these services he never would receive a dollar, though I recollect some instances where both sides of the dispute, after the decision was rendered, joined in making him a handsome present. Wm. D. M. Howard, Thomas O. Larkin, Major Hensley, General Sutter, Sam Brannan, Leidesdorff, Captain Folsom, Colonel Stevenson, of the old American Californians, were Green's warm personal friends. The newcomers were all his friends. When the first Legislature of California met at San Jose, the State was not yet admitted into the Union, but her two first Senators had to be elected. Dr. Gwin and Colonel Fremont were the prominent candidates, and were finally elected, but Green would certainly have been elected to one of these positions had he listened to the entreaties of his friends, and allowed his name to be used. As it was, some insisted on voting for him after his declaration that he would not take the position. When the first Mayor of San Francisco was to be chosen, in 1850, all eyes were turned to Talbot H. Green. He had only to say the word and his election was sure. This was a home office, and not very conspicuous, and Green seemed inclined to accept it. However, John W. Geary, then Alcalde, besought of him not to accept the position, representing to

Green that he had to send home his family to Pennsylvania for want of means to maintain them in San Francisco, and that if he was elected Mayor he could bring them back again. So Green, with his usual generosity, positively declined the position of Mayor, and Geary was, of course, elected. Thus stood Talbot H. Green in the estimation of all; not a whisper or breath to his discredit was ever heard in the community, up to the celebration of the admission of California into the Union, in October, 1850.

In the Fall of 1849 he married the widow Montgomery. They were understood to have been engaged for some time, but on one pretence or another Green deferred the marriage until, at length, very properly, no excuse could be taken, so the marriage ceremony was performed; but it was done in a private sort of a way, at Mrs. Montgomery's home by Frank Turk, who was then Assistant Alcalde of San Francisco. Two witnesses only were present, 126 George H. Howard and W. F. White. This marriage proved to be Green's greatest stumbling block, as will appear when I explain.

On the 29th of October, 1850, the day the people celebrated the admission of California into the Union, Green had, as a matter of course, a prominent place in the grand procession in which we all marched through the streets. As the procession was breaking up and dispersing on the Plaza, a lady who stood looking on suddenly walked forward to Green, and in an excited, astonished way, reached out her hand saying "Oh! Mr. Geddis, can it be possible that you are here in California?" Green, in apparent surprise, took her hand, and said with perfect coolness: "You must be mistaken, madam, in the person. My name is Green—Talbot H. Green." The lady drew back abashed, but said: "Why, certainly I am not mistaken. I cannot be mistaken; I knew you all my life. I know your wife, your sister and your children." A gentleman who stood by said that Green turned pale, and that a tremor shook his frame, but with a forced smile he again denied his identity with Geddis, and in a calm, quiet way outfaced the lady, so that she turned away evidently astonished and doubting.

From this time forward, vague rumors got about that Green had been discovered to be a man sailing under a false name. No one believed the rumors or paid the least attention to them; and so matters ran on until the following year, when the Democratic party called together a convention to nominate a candidate for Mayor of the city, and all other officers of the city government.

The convention met on Saturday afternoon, and organized by electing John A. McGlynn as Chairman. They adopted an order of business, that required the nomination for the least important office to be made first, and so continue up until they reached that of Mayor. The well-known intention of the convention was to nominate Green for that office. McGlynn had called on him, and he had consented to take the nomination, and his nomination was, in fact, a foregone conclusion. Before the convention had reached the nomination for Mayor, it adjourned over until Monday evening. On Sunday morning there appeared in a flashy, irresponsible paper an article in which it was stated that the Democrats would on Monday evening, nominate a well-known merchant for Mayor, who was sailing under a 127 false name, assumed at the time he had disappeared from his old home in Pennsylvania, with a large amount of money he had been entrusted with by the Gettysburg bank. This charge was so plain and direct that it created a profound sensation, and every one spoke of it with astonishment and almost alarm. Brannan, Howard and Larkin, Green's old and warm friends, at once called on him, and, assuring him of unvarying friendship, besought him to confide in them without reserve, and that they would stand by him under all and every circumstance.

He was greatly agitated, but boldly asserted that he was no other than Talbot H. Green, and that it was a case of mistaken identity. They then proposed to call with him on the proprietor of the Sunday paper and demand his authority for the publication he had made. To this Green at once agreed. The editor of the paper, without hesitation, gave the name of a gentleman who had lately arrived from Gettysburg, Pa.

On this person Green and his friends then called, and asked him if he had authorized the publication of the statement of the Sunday paper. He answered: "Yes, of course I did, and Mr. Geddis knows that it is all true." "But you are mistaken," said Green. "I am not the man you think I am. It is a case of mistaken identity." His accuser looked at him with a smile of of ridicule as he replied: "Why, Paul, what nonsense you are talking. You and I knew each other from our childhood up; *you know* I know you, and now that you are rich, why don't you acknowledge to these gentlemen the true state of the case, and then go home like an honest man, and pay up the bank, and be just to your

poor wife and children, and have done with it?" Green still held out boldly, and replied: "Is there no difference between me and the man you take me for?" "Not a particle, except such as ten years would naturally make in the appearance of a middle-aged man, which is very little in your case."

Green's friends were now thrown into doubt, and it appeared to them that the accusation against him must be true; so, on again reaching the street, they besought him to come out candidly, and assured him that they would put up \$25,000 each—or more, if necessary—to clear him from any debt he might owe the bank, and that they would in every way stand by him with brotherly fidelity.

128

It is said that while Green listened to these generous offers of money and friendship he shook as if in an ague fit, and tears flowed fast over his cheek; yet, through it all, his only answer was that the charge was false, and that he would prove to them that it was so.

During the day (Monday) Green called on John A. McGlynn, and related to him just what I have told of this interview with his accuser, and then gave McGlynn the same assurance of the falsity of the charge. In this conversation with McGlynn he told him that it was his intention to leave for Panama the next day by steamer, on his way to his old home, in Pennsylvania, where he was going, he said, to get the necessary proofs to contradict the charges made against him. He then continued: "I want you, Mack, to give me the nomination for Mayor this evening, and I will then address you a letter declining it, thanking the convention for the honor intended, and that will give me the opportunity I want to denounce this scandal about me as false."

In this interview McGlynn said that Green showed great excitement and anxiety of mind. McGlynn had always been a warm personal friend of Green's, and promised to do what he requested with regard to the nomination for Mayor; but when the Convention met they had such a struggle over the nomination of the other city officers that the whole evening was spent, and the Convention again adjourned until Tuesday evening, without reaching the nomination for the position of Mayor. On Tuesday morning it was rumored all around that Talbot H. Green's friends were requested to meet

him at a large auction room on Montgomery street, and from there to escort him to the steamer that was to take him to Panama.

At the time named the large room was full to its utmost capacity. There was a large quantity of champagne opened, and Thomas O. Larkin got upon a table in the midst of the crowd, holding a glass of champagne in his hand. He gave the following as the sentiment of the meeting: "May the most honest man among us all here assembled be as honest, and always remain as honest, as we believe Talbot H. Green to be." All drank the toast, and gave three rousing cheers for Green.

Green was now loudly called for. He got on the table, but as soon as he began to return thanks, his feelings overcame him, and not a word could he utter. His emotion was such that he 129 fairly sobbed. We then formed ourselves into a procession and marched with him to the steamer, where he continued to shake hands with friends until it moved off from the wharf. Then we all turned away with a sad, sickening feeling, for the conviction was forcing itself on us more and more, as we thought it over, that there was to be in the future no such man as our old acquaintance, Talbot H. Green, and that in his place would figure one Paul B. Geddis, who had defrauded the bank of his native town and deserted and dishonored his wife and children. Yes; our feelings were far more disagreeable and sad, as we walked home, each to his own place of business, than they would have been if we had just been laying Talbot H. Green in a last resting place at Lone Mountain. In fact, this strange outcome of so prominent a citizen seemed to cast a shadow of gloom over the whole city that day, reaching every household. It seemed for a moment to check our wild, joyous onward career, and force us to stop to sigh, when we had no time to give to sighing. Another day, and San Francisco forgot it all.

As to Green's subsequent career, I can only state it as known to the general public, which I suppose to be in the main correct. Before leaving he conveyed a large part of his property to his California wife, Mrs. Montgomery that was, and his one child born of her. The remainder he intrusted to the care of his friend Thompson. He took with him, it is said, some \$20,000 in drafts and gold. At the time of his departure he was one of the Commissioners of the Fund of Debt of San Francisco. He also held various other trusts, both private and public, all of which he resigned before leaving. On

board the steamer, while shaking hands with his friends, he had more than once to stop to sign a resignation to one of these sort of trusts. For over a year after he left, no word or tidings of his whereabouts reached his San Francisco friends, and many supposed him dead. Sam Brannan was most active in trying to discover what had become of him. The last trace that could be found of him was in New Orleans, where he had his drafts cashed and where it was found he had registered his name at the hotel as T. Green. At length he was discovered in Cincinnati, it is said, without a dollar. Brannan and some two or three of Green's old friends wrote to him and got him to consent to meet them in the City of New York. This meeting did take place, and after it some of the parties went to Gettysburg and settled in 130 full with the bank. It is understood also that Green and his wife were reconciled, and that he purchased a beautiful farm for his family on the Susquehanna river, to which they retired to live; but how this can be it is hard to say, at least so far as Green is concerned, for not long afterwards we heard of Green being in Texas under his own proper name of Paul Geddis in a land speculation.

It was announced that he was to return to San Francisco and go into business with Sam Brannan. In 1854 he did come back, but he looked broken down and wretched. He appeared to shun every one, and every one shunned him. I met him once after his return. We had been very intimate friends. The meeting was embarrassing and awkward. I did not know how to address him. With me Talbot H. Green was no longer in existence, and as to the poor, weak creature, Paul Geddis, I did not care for his acquaintance; so, without addressing him once by name, we parted. He soon left California, but has appeared here since more than once. But what has become of him in the end I have no knowledge. When Green's friends visited Gettysburg they found the debt he owed the bank to be insignificant—less than \$10,000. Geddis, it appears, was of one of the first families of that old town. His wife was an accomplished lady, and when he disappeared from there he had three lovely children.

Being about to visit Philadelphia, it is said, he was intrusted by the local bank with \$7,000 of city bank notes. These he was to have got redeemed in the city and return the gold to the bank. On reaching the city of Philadelphia, he was entrapped into a gambling den and lost all his own money and nearly all that of the bank. Filled with despair and fright, he changed his name and pushed

his way West. West, West he flew from fancied pursuers, until he finds himself Talbot H. Green, a valuable clerk in the employment of Thomas O. Larkin, in Monterey, California. Riches came to him fast after his move to San Francisco from Monterey in 1849. Now plans of sending the money home to the bank and of returning to his wife and children came constantly to his mind; but from day to day he deferred the good act that his guardian angel urged on him, and then objections seemed to come in his way. What excuse could be given to Howard and Mellis, his partners, for drawing so large a sum on private account? How could he ever tell them that he had assumed a false name? “Oh, wait, wait,” said the devil. “Next week will be time enough to send the money;” and “next week” and “next week” it was all the time. Then came another trouble. He is tempted, he yields, and is married. “Merciful Heaven,” we fancy him to exclaim. “All is lost. Wife and children are dishonored. I must never meet or see them again.” Poor Talbot H. Green! '49ers never harbor an unkind feeling towards you, and always sigh when they speak of your terrible, sudden downfall, though we *now* comprehend, of course, that your many elements of popularity were used by designing men to help them rob the city, and that you were, in fact, a weak tool in their hands.

In all this account of Green, of course there may be some errors, but there are none in the main facts, for they are given as known to us all.

CHAPTER XII.

WAGES AND MERCHANDISE—A SLOW ENGLISH FIRM—A CUSTOMER FOR BOWIE KNIVES—A SHREWD SPECULATION IN SHEETINGS.

Now let me add a word on some more of the misrepresentations of the “Annals.” On page 253 tell us that:

“Laborers' wages were a dollar an hour; skilled mechanics received from twelve to twenty dollars a day.”

Pages 366-367, on “Merchandise,” they say:

“Matters were, perhaps, not quite so bad as when, in the Spring of 1850, chests of tobacco were used to pave the streets or make a solid foundation for houses, and when nearly every article of merchandise went a-begging for buyers, and not finding one, was cast aside to rot or used to fill up mudholes.”*** “In '49 a dollar was paid for a pill, and the same sum for an egg; a hundred dollars for a pair of boots, and twice that for a decent suit of clothes. A single rough brick cost a dime, and a plank some twenty feet long was cheap at ten dollars. At one period of that monstrous year common iron tacks of the smallest size sold for their weight in gold, and for a long period were in request at from five to ten dollars an ounce, but in '51 bales of valuable goods were sometimes not worth the storage.”

As to this statement about wages, divide it by two and it will be about the truth. As to merchandise, the whole statement is an absurdity. I did business in San Francisco all that time, and ought, therefore, to know what I am talking about. The only foundation for the statement that a large quantity of tobacco and other merchandise was thrown in the streets as valueless, is that the first rains of 1849 destroyed a large quantity of tobacco not properly protected, belonging to White, McGlynn & Co.; and some other importing houses also lost heavily in the same way. These goods were sent to auction, but at that time Californians would buy nothing damaged where goods in perfect order could be had, so not a bid was offered; and the goods were finally pitched into the street to fill up mud-holes. There never 133 was a day in San Francisco when good, merchantable goods did not bring at least a reasonably good price. There were times, of course, when sales were very slow and profits very light, as there were other times when sales were quick and profits very large; but the “Annals” account of these fluctuations is incorrect to absurdity. Undoubtedly, immense losses and sacrifices on goods often occurred in the early days of California to Eastern shippers, through the incapacity and bad management of the consignees, if not by their dishonesty.

I cannot but think that a famous English firm, S., J. & Co., doing business on the corner of California and Sansome streets in 1849, was an example of this sort. They had a large stock of English imported goods. The building in which they did business was a remarkably good one for '49. The whole first story was filled to the ceiling with merchandise, and besides there was an

immense pile of unbleached sheetings and shirtings in the inclosure belonging to the store. I should think there must have been 2,000 bales of these goods piled up in this lot, close to the store. These gentlemen did business in the old English style. Their counting room was in the second story, a large room, with a part of it partitioned off for a private office. The store was opened every day precisely at nine o'clock, and closed precisely at half-past three each afternoon. When a customer made his appearance, the salesman, an intelligent young Englishman, whose name, I think, was Frederick Ayers, received him and with politeness conducted him to the presence of one of the firm in the private office, where the customer was expected to lay aside his hat while he talked over his business.

Of course, no Californian would submit to this sort of nonsense, and the consequence was that poor S., J. & Co. did no business worth speaking of. Their clerk, as I have said, was a bright young man. He soon discovered his employers' difficulty, and did his best to open their eyes; but he might just as well have proposed to them to turn Mahometans as to adopt the Californian style of doing business. I recollect he once gave me an amusing description of a scene that occurred in the counting-room of this firm. It was about as follows:

Just as we opened in the morning, in walked a good humored, well-built man, in manners and rig the California miner to the life. As he entered he exclaimed: "Here, chap, where are the two old cocks they say keep this shebang. I have been 134 here twice this morning, but your door was closed. Is any one dead in the diggings, that you keep shut up so?"

"No, sir; no one is dead. What do you wish, sir?"

"Oh, I am glad of that, for when a fellow dies here in California, there is always a great loss of time in burying him. What a pity it is that when a fellow does die he cannot manage to bury himself. It would save the living so much; for time, you know, here in California, is too precious to be thrown away on dead men. Well, but, just as I was saying, my business is this: I met Bartol the other day—you know Bartol. He says he is a sort of clerk of yours, as well as being a Custom House officer, and besides a city Alderman. Well, he told me that these old English coons who keep this shanty

had just received a consignment of handsome bowie-knives from their country. I am in the trading business in the southern mines, and I think the knives, from what Bartol says, will do our boys first rate. I will take a few dozen, and perhaps all they have, if the cost don't outsize my pile."

"I will inquire," said I, as I turned towards the door of the office. Just then Mr. S. appeared in the doorway, dressed of course in the old English gentleman's style, and holding in his hand a copy of the London *Times*, the only paper he considered worth reading. Before I spoke he said: "Frederick, tell that person that the English cutlery will not be ready to expose for sale until twelve o'clock to-morrow."

"I hear what he says, Fred.," said the miner, as he walked past me straight into the private office, and threw himself, in a careless way, into a vacant easy chair, just opposite to the one in which Mr. S. was now seated. Of course he did not remove his hat, and Mr. S. continued to read his paper, without once looking towards the intruder, who now said: "Say, friend, I cannot wait until to-morrow. I have been in San Francisco now nearly a whole day, and that is a d—d long time to be away from my business, so I must be back to my camp to-morrow sure; and I would just as leave pack home some of those 'ere English knives Bartol told me about if they are the right sort, for I have dust left after purchasing my other goods. It is down here at Burgons & Co.'s bank, and I hate to take it back home, and I know the boys want the knives; so, if you have a mind to, friend, Fred and I will knock open one of these here packages while you take a squint at the English invoice, and we can tell 135 in two minutes if it is a trade or not; so what do you say, friend? I am in a d—d big hurry, as I told you."

The merchant now slowly raised his eyes from the newspaper, and let them fall on the miner, with a cold, severe expression, in which disgust had a share, as he said, in a tone of voice suited to his indignant feelings: "The goods you speak of, sir, will be opened for inspection to-morrow, precisely at twelve o'clock, as I have already told Mr. Frederick Ayers to tell you."

"And that is your answer, Mr. S.?"

“Yes, sir,” slowly replied Mr. S.

“And what the devil use will it be to me, when I will not be here to see them?” said the miner, as he arose from his seat and walked out.

When passing me, he beckoned me to follow him. I did so, and, just as we reached the stairway, he turned round to me and said: “Fred, I never saw you before in my life, but I like you, and I just want to tell you to keep a sharp look-out for your pay, for these old cocks of yours are sure to bust up. Nothing can save them, not if they had Queen Victoria and the Bank of England at their backs.”

When I returned to the counting-room, Mr. S. called to me, saying: “Frederick, where did you know that impudent Yankee that has just left here?”

“I never saw him before, sir.”

“Why, he called you Fred?”

“Yes, sir; he heard you call me Frederick, so he caught up the name and used it in his own familiar way, as though he had always known me.”

“Well, well; how can a gentleman live and do business here in this town, and put up with such confounded Yankee impudence?”

In the early part of 1849 there was but little demand for unbleached sheeting, or drilling, or in fact for any kind of cotton goods. It was only used for lining cheaply constructed houses, and, as almost every importing house had a few bales on hand, S., J. & Co.'s large stock of these goods remained for a long time almost unbroken. Suddenly the demand became immense. The miners found that by using it they could dam almost any stream in a very cheap and quick way. They made bags with it, and filled the bags with earth, and with them constructed a dam that would turn the largest stream in half the time and with half the expense it would cost in any other way. S., J. & Co. found no notice of this sudden demand for sheeting in the London *Times*, so they remained totally

oblivious of the fact. Not so the firm of T., Mc. & Co., doing business on Sacramento street at that time. These young merchants were bright and sharp and attentive to their business. One or two of them had been educated to business by that prince of merchants, Eugene Kelly, now in the banking business in New York and San Francisco. The first large order for sheeting that came from the mining region told the story of the new demand to the Sacramento street firm. So Wm. T., the head of the firm, without the loss of a single minute, found himself quietly ascending the stairs that led to Messrs. S., J. & Co.'s lonesome counting-room in California street. He approached the merchants in true English style. They asked him to be seated, and were very friendly. He commenced talking over the late news from Europe, in which he appeared much interested. He explained that it was a sort of a dull day with his firm in Sacramento street, and that he liked the English way of not rushing things as the Yankees did here in California, and he thought, besides, a chat between merchants now and then was very advantageous.

“Yes, yes, my dear sir; you are right. Frederick, hand me that box of extra Havanas.”

The cigars came, and then began a social smoke. Then came a bottle of nice port wine, and, after half an hour of chat of every sort, T. arose to go, but just then he suddenly exclaimed:

“Oh, I was near forgetting that my partners wanted I should ask you for what you could let us have, say, twenty bales of those sheetings, as we find ourselves in a position to job them out in the mining districts.”

“Oh, my dear fellow,” exclaimed Mr. S., “you would do us a world of accommodation if you would help us to work off those sheetings. They are a most unfortunate importation. We will put them to you at home cost, Mr. T. Frederick, bring me the invoice book.”

The book is opened; the cost is found to be very low. Mr. T. says, in a careless way: “Give me a bill for twenty bales, and I will give you a check for the amount.”

While Frederick is making out the bill, T. falls into a conversation about an English lord, who had died some six months before, but interrupts himself to say: “If you wish you can 137 note on that

bill that we can duplicate it next week at the same price, as I am going to take some pains to help you out of this sheeting business.”

“Thank you, my good fellow. Frederick, put that indorsement on Mr. T.'s bill, and if you wish, Mr. T., we will make a sale to you of the whole lot, to be taken and paid for at the rate of twenty bales a week at the same figure.”

T. seemed to hesitate, but, after a puff or two on his cigar, he exclaimed: “Well, do so. I will take a trip into the mines myself, if it is necessary to push them; so you had better tear that bill up for the twenty bales, and give me a bill for the whole lot, and credit on it the money I have just paid you, and each week I will send you a check for the same amount until it is all paid; and I will take the goods away as fast as I make sale of them. I was hesitating because I thought I ought to consult my partners before making so large a purchase; but, if they grumble, I will take it on my own account.”

The bill was duly made out and handed to T., who placed it with a trembling, excited hand, in his pocket-book. All was now satisfactory, and, with a warm shake-hands, they parted. After T. left, Mr. S. arose, and, rubbing his hands with evident satisfaction, exclaimed to his partner: “Well, J., that surely is a lucky transaction this morning.”

“Yes, yes; so it is, S. I give you great credit for the way you drew T. into it; that port wine did no harm, either. I saw after he took a second glass that he became very sanguine as to what he could do with the sheetings; but there was nothing wrong in that little strategy of using the wine, as it is our duty to do the best we can for our consignors.”

“Oh, yes; that was my view of it, J.; but I must say that T. is a most gentlemanly fellow. He would really pass among our English educated merchants. I do hope he will be able to struggle through after this transaction with us to-day.”

“Well,” said T., to his partners, as he reached his place of business in Sacramento street, “I have had a fine cigar, enjoyed a bottle of the best port wine in San Francisco, and got a bill of sale of every yard of sheetings that S., J. & Co. have on hand, at their home cost. What do you think of that?”

“Think of it,” said Mc.; I don't *think* anything about it; I *know* that you have made twenty thousand dollars by the transaction.”

138

“Yes, more than that,” said the other partner, M.

“The only drawback to my whole visit and trade,” continued T., “was that I had to talk about half a dozen old English lords that the devil took to himself this last year or so.”

That purchase is said to have been the foundation of T., Mc. & Co.'s great success in business, and perhaps the primary cause of the failure, which took place some months later, of S., J. & Co.

CHAPTER XIII.

JOHN W. GEARY—HISTORY OF HIS ADVANCEMENTS—AS ALCALDE AND AS MAYOR.

There is but one other subject worth attention treated of in the “Annals.” It is the memoirs of the men who, in the estimation of their authors, were the great lights of 1849.

The first memoir is that of John W. Geary, with a handsome steel engraving of that gentleman. I dislike exceedingly to say of this memoir what the truth of history demands, for Colonel Geary managed his way through the world with consummate skill, and succeeded, some way or other, always to work himself into places of honor and profit. After he left California, we find him successful in his application to President Lincoln for a post of honor as a territorial Governor, and then we find him a General in the army, and then we see the great State of Pennsylvania placing him in her gubernatorial chair. All these honors conferred and worn well, it is claimed by his friends, should guard his memory, now that he is dead, from any examination as to his worthiness of the honors he succeeded in grasping. I have no disposition to make any such examination; but, in justice to us '49ers and to you, our children, I insist on my right to give a true and faithful picture of Colonel John W. Geary, as he was known to us in San Francisco in 1849. Even this I

would not think necessary to do if the authors of the “Annals” had been any way moderate in their misstatements of facts with regard to his life in San Francisco. They are not satisfied, however, in this memoir, with an exhibition of sickening, fulsome flattery, but to exalt Geary they insult and seek to degrade in the eyes of their readers the whole community in which he lived.

Look again at the quotation from page 719 of the “Annals,” and judge if I am justified in what I say of the position of the authors in this memoir of Geary. It is a sort of a description, *in brief*, of the immigration to this State in 1849, from which 140 you, children of California, sprung, and is in strict keeping with the representations of us all through this book—a book, too, that was dedicated to “the Society of California Pioneers.” I have shown elsewhere clearly, I think, that San Francisco could justly claim the right in 1851 to be known throughout the Union as “the city of schoolhouses and churches,” so that I will not now enlarge on this subject.

According to the “Annals” account of the part Colonel Geary took in the reduction of Mexico, his name should have been known to us all as familiarly as that of General Scott. The fact is, if this “Annals” account is correct, Geary was a little ahead of Scott in all that makes a hero on the battlefield. Be this as it may, I do not propose to discuss it here. If he won laurels in Mexico, there is no wish on my part to displace a leaf from the wreath that may be upon his brow. But it is a fact that when he appeared among us in 1849, in San Francisco, with the commission of Postmaster in his pocket, we were until then totally ignorant of the existence of such a man as John W. Geary, much less of this wonderful hero of the Mexican War. If the authors of the “Annals” had written truly the memoirs of Colonel Geary, instead of the fulsome nonsense they strung together, the California chapter of it would have been about as follows:

Colonel John W. Geary, last American Alcalde and first Mayor of San Francisco, arrived here in the steamship Oregon on April the 1st, 1849, with the commission of President Polk as Postmaster of San Francisco in his pocket. He was accompanied by his wife and one child. Colonel Geary had served, it was said, with some credit in the Mexican War, as Colonel of one of the Pennsylvania regiments. As to money or property, he had not a dollar on his arrival in San Francisco. In personal appearance, he was a good-looking man, with quiet, unassuming manners. He was evidently

desirous of pleasing, and, although he did not succeed in attaching to himself warm personal friends, yet, by a sort of Uriah Heepism in his way of talking to you, he disarmed all active opposition to any of his schemes. He had nothing of the bold, dashing Colonel about him. His voice was always low and passionless. His step was noiseless and cautious, and you would often hear him speak your name before you heard his footfall. If, from this sort of manner, you should get an idea that he was easily moved from an object he had in view that was personal to himself, you would soon be undeceived if you undertook to do so. He had scarcely got the Postoffice into running order when the news from Washington reached him that he was removed by General Taylor, who had become President. Geary was not sorry to throw up the Postoffice, as his pay was small to what he saw he could make in California in some other way, and then the department did not make provision for half the clerk help that the San Francisco Postoffice required. He made an arrangement to go into the auction and commission business with Van Voorhees and Sudden. Just then, however, an opportunity was offered him to again take office. This time the prospect of remuneration was good, so he accepted the offer of his friends, and was elected Alcalde without opposition.

At this time he gave great offense to the real, bona fide American Californians by sending his wife and two children, one born here, back to Pennsylvania. To those who remonstrated with him against this step, he gave assurances that he sent them away because he could not stand the expense they were to him here, but promised that just as soon as his prospects grew bright he would again bring them to California.

Geary served as Alcalde until the new city charter of May 1, 1850, required the election of a Mayor, when, by making earnest appeals to prominent citizens, he received the Democratic nomination to that position, and was elected by a handsome majority.

In this contest he was very much aided by Talbot H. Green, whose popularity was then at its height, though so soon to disappear forever. After his term of office as Mayor expired, he received what proved to him to be a much better office—the position of Commissioner of the Funded Debt. This position he held up to the date of his departure from California, February, 1852, when he

left the State for good. Colonel Geary's career in California was a wonderful success, so far as he personally was concerned. He came to our State, according to his oft-repeated assertions, without a dollar. He was never engaged in any trading or business while he was here. The legitimate earnings of the offices he held could not have been over \$10,000 a year, yet when he left the State, after a stay of two years and ten months, he was worth, at the very least estimate, \$200,000 in coin, and most people estimated him as being worth a much larger sum. Unfortunately for him, he intrusted about \$80,000 of this cash to Simmons, Hutchinson & Co., who failed while it was in their hands, and Geary lost most of it. Out of this circumstance a litigation grew which twenty years did not wholly terminate. Colonel Geary was never known to purchase even one city lot at any of the sales of property made by the authorities of San Francisco, for his doing so would have been illegal, as he was all that time an officer of the city government. Everyone, therefore, was taken by surprise when in the late months of 1851 he exhibited a map of the city with all the lots owned by him designated in bright colors, which he now offered for sale. The large number of these lots astonished people, so that the first exclamation on seeing the map was always: "Why, Geary owns a quarter of the city!" This vast property he sold at reasonably good prices, for they were choice lots, well located. He did not, it is believed, retain even one for himself, and, shaking the dust of California from his feet, he took his departure, a rich man, for his old home in Pennsylvania.

Had the "Annals" given the above as the life of Colonel Geary in San Francisco, I would not have troubled myself to say a word about him; but these authors have the impudence to deck Colonel Geary out as a political saint, who was endowed with wonderful talents, and who used those talents with generous unselfishness in governing a community who were all known to be thieves, vagabonds and blacklegs—for this is the plain English of the quotation I made from page 719 of their book.

Let me draw attention to some of the swindles of the office-holding gang in San Francisco in 1849 and '50, and even later, and see where our *saint* Geary stood on such occasions. Almost the first act of the Ayuntamiento, as organized under Colonel Geary as Alcalde, was to pass what was called "An Ordinance for Revenue." This was as infamous an attempt to rob, under color of law, the newcomers, as could be devised by thieves. It is worth while to read Horace Hawes' "veto

message” relating to this act. You will find it on page 224 of the proceedings of the Ayuntamiento, as published by order of the Board of Supervisors in 1860. It was no part of Hawes' duty, of course, to send “veto messages” to the Ayuntamiento, for he was only Prefect; but neither had that body the right to enact any such thieving ordinance, so he took the responsibility and did the best act of his life when he checkmated the gang in their villainous project. 143 To understand exactly where the “little joker,” as Hawes used to say, lay in this famous ordinance, you should recollect that in August, 1849, there were very few regularly established mercantile business houses in San Francisco.

The newly established houses were well supplied with goods, but the older houses were very badly supplied. To these older houses belonged nearly all the members of the Ayuntamiento. The emigrants were arriving in great numbers in San Francisco at this date, and many of them had small lots of merchandise—not enough to make it worth their while to rent a room, or even to pitch a tent to enable them to dispose of their stocks, so they sold them as best they could by peddling them around. This, of course, checked the business of the old crowd, so they contrived this ordinance to prevent the newcomers, who had only small lots of goods, from selling them, in the only way they could sell them; and, if the ordinance had gone into effect, the law-makers could have bought those goods at their own prices. Hawes was upheld by us all, while Geary and the members of the Ayuntamiento were denounced bitterly. Soon a town hall was declared to be necessary. A man by the name of P. Dexter Tiffany came forward and offered a house and lot he owned on Stockton street, near Green street, for \$50,000. This house was altogether out of the way, and utterly useless for such a purpose, yet we find (see page 110 of Ayuntamiento proceedings) Sam Brannan and Talbot H. Green recommending its purchase, and it was purchased; Colonel John W. Geary presiding at the meeting and making no objection. As a matter of course, the building was never used as a City Hall. This was a plain, unvarnished swindle, with our saint looking on. At a Council meeting of April 1st, 1850, Geary presiding, a more infamous swindle yet was concocted. A cobbledy high mount of a hotel called the “Graham House,” on the corner of Pacific and Kearny streets, was purchased for \$150,000 for a City Hall, \$100,000 cash and the Tiffany property. This hotel was a dismal, ill-contrived, gingerbread, worthless sort of a shanty, unfit in every particular

for a City Hall. The Council spent over \$50,000 on it to try to put in shape for city use, but utterly failed in doing so. The location was bad—very bad—much more so than the same location would be now. At that time there was a sort of a swamp or slough between it and the Plaza. This purchase disgusted every one, and a sense of relief was felt 144 when, soon afterwards, it was burned to the ground, and Peter Smith got the lot the building stood on, in one of his swindling sales of city property. Graham, who owned this property, was a member of the Council, but modestly did not vote on the purchase. Frank Tilford was also a member, and refused to vote. Matthew Crooks voted against it and denounced it as a swindle. Every one of the other members—five in number—were *directly or indirectly* interested in the purchase being made. Where was our saint's voice as he sat in the chair that day? Then came the enormous wharf swindles, when money was voted by the hundred thousand, at a meeting, to build wharves that were never built. Nearly \$500,000 was voted away at that time on this pretence, and all the people got in return was three miserable bulkheads—one at the foot of Pacific street, one on Market street and one on California street. Not one of these was worthy the name of *wharf*. Captain Keys was kept under pay all the time, at a salary of a thousand dollars a month, to engineer the construction of these works. This engineering was, of course, a perfect pretence, as none was necessary for the sort of work done. Where was our saint when all this robbing was going on? The truth is, Geary, Brannan, Green, and one or two others, ran the city government in their own interest, from the early part of '49 to the fall of '51, and they all came out of the job rich. Of course, there were outsiders who took a hand with them when it paid them to do so.

But, perhaps, it will be said: “See how Colonel Geary fought Hawes and Justice Colton, when they began to steal the city property, or give it away.” And, further, it may be said, “See how boldly Geary fought the Peter Smithites.” Yes; he fought both these thieving factions desperately. Hawes he completely beat from the field, and before the other he beat a retreat, after making a good fight. But why did he fight them? Because these two factions—the Hawes faction and the Peter Smith faction—were rivals of his faction, in stripping the city of her property, and he had to drive them from the field, or quit himself. When the Peter Smithites triumphed, it appeared to Geary that “all in sight” was stolen, in this terrible wholesale grab of the Smith faction; so he left the State.

But in this Geary did not show his usual foresight; for within the following few years swindles that for magnitude and unblushing effrontery would compare favorably with even the 145 Smith swindle, were successfully carried through. Yes; and up to this very time a handsomely paying business in the swindling line often crops out in the official circles of San Francisco.

It may be asked if the auction sale of city property under the auspices of Geary & Co. were not fairly conducted. I tell you, NO; for there was a villainous fraud practiced on the unsophisticated outsiders by the surveyor of this ring. You must recollect that, at the time of these sales, the whole city, east of California street, south and west of Kearny street, and north and west of Pacific street, was a confused mass of sandhills and valleys, and that it was impossible by the eye to tell the true location of any of the proposed streets beyond the limits I have named.

Eddy, the surveyor, ran out all the streets by actual survey, and mapped them properly. In making his survey, when he came to where lots were in a favorable location, he put a *private* mark opposite the numbers of such lots, indicating their appearance and probable value. He then made two copies of this map; one intended for the public to see, which had no sort of explanation on it. The other copy was carefully noted, so that at a glance you could tell the sort of location each lot had in reference to the streets, and each lot was especially noted. Thus, "A nice building lot;" "On a high sandhill, covered with oak timber;" "In a nice grass valley;" or, it may be, "Inaccessible, one-half pretty good." And so on, in that way. Geary, Brannan, Green, and about twenty or thirty others, had the use of this map, each paying Eddy fifty dollars for the privilege. I, with three or four of my friends, went to one of these auction sales, intending to purchase. We wanted lots, of course, in a good location. We looked at the map, but could not understand the location of a single lot, and Eddy refused all information; so we did not bid.

After the sale, Eddy, on being paid to do so, went with the purchasers and showed each his lot, and then put down stakes properly numbered, so as to correspond with the number on the map.

When I saw the number put on the lots I had intended to purchase, I went to the Surveyor's office to see who had purchased them. I there found that the purchaser was a merchant, a friend of mine.

I called on him, and asked him what he would take for these lots I wanted. He said: "Five hundred 146 each," and I took them at that price, without hesitation. They cost him just twenty-five dollars each. I asked him how on earth he was able to make such good selections, and told him of my inability to recognize the location of a single lot on Eddy's map.

"I would have been in the same fix," said he, "but a friend of mine, who has a way of getting the secrets of the ring that is running the city business, got me a sight at Eddy's *private* map by paying him (Eddy) \$50. This was well laid out, for I have made about \$1,400 out of the three lots I have just sold you, and have as many more, just as good, left."

And then, again, the ring owned the auctioneer, and no outsider's bid *was heard*, except the lot was not wanted by any member of the ring. Brannan, Green, and many other members of the Council, contrary to all decency and law, boldly bid in lots at these sales by the dozen.

For this, I refer you to page 239 of the same published proceedings of the Ayuntamiento.

Brannan, on one occasion, tried to have himself appointed auctioneer. (See page 79 of the published proceedings.) But, failing in this, he got, what did him just as well, his partner's brother-in-law, George B. Tyler, appointed. Tyler worked for the city in this capacity of auctioneer just two days. He was altogether unfit for the position, and was a mere tool of the ring. And what do you think did the ring pay him out of the city funds for these two days' work? I refer you to page 153 of same proceedings, and you will find that they paid him the snug little sum of \$17,100. Matthew Crooks and one other voted against this swindle.

Where was our saint, Colonel Geary, that day?

He is recorded as presiding over that meeting, and it is a fact that he used his influence to aid Brannan in having Tyler allowed the enormous pay. But, perhaps, it will be remarked that in the recorded amount of city property sold at auction, no lots appear as bid in by Colonel Geary. Such is the case, undoubtedly; but it came out afterwards that Geary was one of the largest purchasers at

those auction sales, the lots being bid off in the name of one of the Ross brothers and other friends who lent him their names for the purpose.

The authors of the “Annals” say Geary came here “friendless and a stranger.” How is this? He came here with the 147 commission of Postmaster in his pocket. Was that being friendless and a stranger?

All the rest of us '49ers came here at that time friendless and strangers to each other, without even the commission of Postmaster in our pockets to introduce us to the community.

When reading over this memoir of Geary, a '49er cannot help thinking sometimes that the authors intended, by their extravagance and absurdity, to ridicule Colonel Geary. Among other absurd, untrue, things they tell us of, is their assertion that the child born to Mrs. Geary in April, 1849, was the first male child of purely American parents, that was born in San Francisco after the cession of California to the United States.

The author should have told us what all the other American mothers were about who were here long before Mrs. Geary, to allow this honor to fall to her.

I have reviewed this memoir more extensively than I intended, but my wish is that all should understand what is the true early history of our State; and, when I place things in a new or different light from what you have before viewed them, then I trust you will investigate such points for yourself, and determine how far I am correct in what I tell you. The truth is, Geary sent his family home because he made up his mind to leave the State just as soon as he could make “a stake” to go home with. His whole career here was intensely selfish. He never believed in California. He never liked California. In two years and ten months he amassed a fortune out of his official positions in San Francisco, and then left the State forever. This “Annals” memoir, with its handsome steel engraving of Geary, it is said, was the foundation of his success in politics when he returned East, both with President Lincoln and his fellow citizens of Pennsylvania.

The next memoir is that of Charles J. Brenham, second and fourth Mayor of San Francisco, accompanied by a very good likeness in wood of that gentleman. If the reader inquire, I think he

will find that old Californians and '49ers will indorse every word of praise bestowed by the authors of the "Annals" on Captain Brenham. It does us good to recall his memory; he was always so open, frank and generous in his intercourse with his fellow citizens. I have so often been obliged to quote from the "Annals," for the purpose of disproving their position, that it gives pleasure now to quote for the purpose of indorsing what they say:

148

"During Mr. Brenham's whole official career not the slightest imputation was ever made impugning the purity of his motives or his strict integrity. He was never interested in any way pecuniarily with any speculation connected with the city. He never availed himself of his position for the purpose of personal aggrandizement. No one ever has performed, or ever will perform, the duties of an office with more purity of purpose, and with a greater regard for the true interests of the city, than did Mr. Brenham. He retired from his office without the slightest taint of suspicion."*****

"Mr. Brenham held office, and possessed the power of turning his position into a medium of great, though dishonorable gains. It is but just to give him the due meed of praise, and say to him who has justly done his duty to his fellow citizens and himself: 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant.'"

No; Captain Brenham did not go into office poor and come out rich, as others had done. He is now in a far better world, let us hope and believe, and has left to his children the proud, priceless inheritance of an untarnished name.

Next comes the memoir of Stephen R. Harris, third Mayor of San Francisco, accompanied by a woodcut portrait that is not a good likeness, and does him injustice in that respect. The memoir itself is hardly up in praise to the estimate the Doctor has universally been held in by his fellow citizens in California.

Then comes the memoir of C. K. Garrison, fifth Mayor of San Francisco, with a very good likeness in wood. The memoir consists of a little family history, which we suppose in the main to be correct.

Then comes the memoir of Sam Brannan, of whom a very flattering woodcut is given. This memoir, for effrontery and impudence, outdoes the memoir of Geary, and for misrepresentation nearly comes up to the Geary story. Brannan's early life shows him to be a bold, daring, reckless man in every position into which he threw himself, whether as leader of the Mormons around Cape Horn, or as doing business for them afterwards in San Francisco and at Sutter's Fort; or as a member of the Town Council of Sacramento or San Francisco—he exhibited a tyrannical, overbearing and grasping disposition. He opposed public plunder, and made a great outcry when he was to have no share in its fruits; but when he was “in,” it was quite another matter. He was a prime mover in the famous revenue ordinance business vetoed by Hawes. He was a member of the Ayuntamiento when most of those plundering auction sales of city property were planned and carried through (see page 88 of proceedings of City Council), where by four votes he carried through 149 the sale of 250 city lots. These votes—the only ones given in favor of that sale—were Brannan, Green, Harris and Post. When the sale came off, Brannan, though a member of the Council, purchased about sixty of the most valuable lots sold, in company with his partner, Osburn. (See page 236 of the proceedings of the Council.) Afterwards, he voted for and carried through appropriations to the amount of some \$300,000 to improve and bring into market these very lots. (See Hawes' letter to the Assembly of California, on page 247.) Look at page 111, and see the active part he took in the purchase of the Tiffany House. Look at page 79, where he has the modesty to ask to be appointed auctioneer, though a member of the Council. Look at page 153, where he gets his partner's brother-in-law paid that enormous fee for two days' work. Look at page 82, where he made an effort to have us all individually assessed to improve the streets leading to his lately purchased lots. Brannan never would have been so successful in his schemes for self-aggrandizement if he had not been actively aided by Talbot H. Green; for, notwithstanding Green had a hand in every corrupt scheme put on foot, he had an unaccountable personal popularity that defied the opposition of those who saw through the villainy that was every day perpetrated by those who controlled the machinery of the city government. The authors of the “Annals” make a foolish mistake in their attempt to dress up Sam as a historic political saint of '49. The best they could have done for him was to have said nothing about him.

Sam collected large sums of money, in the way of tithes, from his fellow Mormons during the first years of his life in California.

Here is what General Sherman says of him, in his own memoir, on page 53:

“I remember that Mr. Clark was in camp talking to Colonel Mason about matters and things generally, when he inquired: ‘Governor, what business has Sam Brannan to collect the tithes here?’ Clark admitted that Brannan was the head of the Mormon Church in California, and he was simply questioning as to Brannan's right, as High Priest, to compel the Mormons to pay him the regular tithes. Colonel Mason answered: ‘Brannan has a perfect right to collect the tax if you Mormons are fools enough to pay it.’ ‘Then,’ said Clark, ‘I, for one, won't pay it any longer.’ Colonel Mason added: ‘This is public land, and the gold is the property of the United States. All of you here are trespassers; but, as the Government is benefited by your getting out the gold, I don't intend to interfere.’ I 150 understood afterwards that, from that time, the payment of the tithes ceased, but Brannan had already collected enough money wherewith to hire Sutter's hospital and to open a store there, in which he made more money than any merchant in California during that Summer and Fall.”

It is further told of Sam that Brigham Young, on hearing of these collections, sent to him for the proceeds; but Sam sent back word to Brigham that he had collected considerable sums of money from the Mormons in the name of the Lord, and that as soon as the Lord called on him for the money he would pay it over; but that he would hold on to it until the Lord did call.

If this story is true, it shows that Brigham met his match, for once at least, in his deputy, our Sam Brannan. In 1864, the Republican party needed money for campaign uses in the Presidential contest of that year. This induced them to put Sam, who was then rich, on the electoral ticket. The Democrats hit at some of Sam's supposed failings, by caricaturing him on a transparency in one of their torchlight processions. He was represented as marching to battle against the rebels with a bottle of whisky in one hand a pack of cards in the other, with this inscription: “Sam Brannan's weapons of warfare.” The Republicans enjoyed this take-off as did the Democrats.

Poor Sam; it is said that the Lord did call for that money, after all.

As I will not in this volume again refer, in detail, to the frauds practiced on us in early times, I wish here to say that in my review of the memoirs of Geary and Brannan, I did not refer to a hundredth part of the swindles carried through every department of the city government at that time. What San Francisco '49er can forget the harassing frauds practiced on him while Mr. Dennis McCarthy was Street Superintendent? It would take a whole chapter to tell you the half of them. Who can forget that cunning ex-office-holder of New York City, Moses G. Lenard, who got a place in the Board of Aldermen on great professions of reform and honesty of purpose, but who took every chance to aggrandize himself, and succeeded in the end in getting seventy or eighty thousand dollars for building a bulkhead at the foot of Market street, useless in its character, and not worth ten thousand dollars to build, at the outside? Lenard and McCarthy both left us, with their pockets well filled, to figure, of course, like others of the same way of acting, at annual dinners in the 151 Eastern cities, and talk about the heroic pioneer days in California.

The next memoir is that of Captain Folsom. The Captain was known to us '49ers as a cold, austere, unsocial sort of a man; but we never doubted his fidelity to the Government. His action in the matter of the Leidesdorff estate, and also his action in the sale of Government stores, just after gold-dust began to appear as a circulating medium in California, caused many to bitterly denounce him, though in both cases they may have done him injustice. I will give the facts as current in San Francisco in 1849, in relation to both these matters, and all can judge of them for themselves: Soon after the discovery of gold, in the fall of '47 or early in '48, provisions and clothing became very scarce, and commanded fabulous prices. The General Government, at that time, had a large amount of clothing and provisions in California, in charge of Captain Folsom. The war was over, so there was no prospect of these stores being needed at any time in the near future. Gov. Mason, then in command in California, ordered the supplies condemned and sold at public sale. Captain Folsom accordingly advertised them for sale. The day of sale came, and there was a perfect rush of miners and traders from all directions to the place of sale. They came weighed down with bags of gold dust, which they were willing to let go at the value of ten dollars per ounce, when its least true value

was sixteen dollars. None had gold coin to offer, for there was hardly any in circulation. Captain Folsom was known to hold a large amount of coin belonging to the United States Government, sent out to pay off the sailors and soldiers, now being discharged. When the sale opened, the auctioneer announced that nothing but gold *coin* would be received by the Government in payment for the goods offered. This announcement was received with shouts of disapprobation from the whole throng of gold-dust holders; but Captain Folsom remained firm, and it is said that the consequence was that two well-known friends of Folsom's were the only bidders, as they alone had gold coin to offer. The goods, of course, went for one-tenth their market value, and somebody made an immense thing out of that sale.

The story of Captain Leidesdorff, as related to me soon after his death by an old friend of his, is romantic as well as very sad. Whenever I visit San Francisco, and find myself walking in the street that bears his name, it comes to my memory. If my recollection is good, it is about as follows:

152

William A. Leidesdorff was a native of one of the West India Islands, and had received a reasonably good education, for which he was indebted to an English planter, who, from some cause, had taken a deep interest in him from his infancy. This English gentleman had a bachelor brother, who was a wealthy cotton merchant in the city of New Orleans, and to him he sent young Leidesdorff, at the age of twelve years. The boy's close attention to business and prepossessing manners soon won the warmest esteem of the New Orleans merchant. As years passed on, William became his confidential clerk, and stood closer to him in all his business relations than any other person in his employment. Now comes to the young man news of the death of his Island friend, and of a considerable legacy bequeathed to himself. Leidesdorff was somewhat good-looking, and, as I have said, very prepossessing in his manners. He mingled in the first society in New Orleans, and was a great favorite with all the young ladies of that class. He played the guitar, and accompanied himself in songs filled with all that sweet, dreamy softness of expression and tone one's fancy always connects with the music of the Sunny South. He now falls desperately in love with a beautiful girl. She is the pride and darling of one of the proudest French families in New Orleans. He thinks he has won favor in her eyes, for she seems so happy when he is near her, and

her look never refuses to meet his, no matter how plainly it reveals his feelings of admiration. But Leidesdorff knows he dare not declare his love, for two reasons. The first is, that he has not the wealth to sanction him in asking the daughter of so proud a family to be his wife. The second is a secret he dare not disclose, and yet dare not marry such a girl as Hortense L. without disclosing. The first difficulty is soon removed by a sad event—the death of his sincerely-loved employer, who wills him every dollar of his large property. His great accession of wealth did not in the least lessen the poignancy of Leidesdorff's grief for the loss he had sustained, and for more than a month he goes nowhere, sees no one except on unavoidable business. He always chose the shade of evening for his necessary walks for health. One evening, about six weeks after the death of his friend, he started out for his usual constitutional walk. The moon is out in all her brilliancy, and the evening is beautiful beyond description. Somehow his heart this evening, though sad, is full of thoughts of Hortense L.; 153 and, unperceived by himself, his steps lead through the street in which is her beautiful home. He is now before it. It is a large mansion, a little back from the street, surrounded by ornamental grounds. The front porch is shaded by beautiful climbers of every description, which half hide the front door from view. He stops, hesitates, and cannot pass on. He turns and ascends the marble steps that lead up to the porch. Just as he is about to lay his hand on the silver bell, he is startled by the rustling of a lady's dress. It is Hortense. She advances from a seat that was a favorite one of hers on such evenings, and on which he had often sat with her, while they sang together to the accompaniment of his guitar. This is the first time they have met since the death of his benefactor, and Hortense's father had reported to her the depression and sad state of mind that event had brought on their young friend. In an instant their hands are clasped together, but not a word does either utter; each tries hard to control emotions that so suddenly surprised them. Hortense struggles desperately, for she fears to betray feelings her womanly pride demands should yet remain known only to herself. William struggles to conceal feelings he dare not declare openly, as he felt that the terrible secret of his life debarred him from ever asking Hortense's hand in marriage. But they both failed in the effort and broke down. The result was a wild, passionate declaration of love from Leidesdorff, and an unreserved confession from Hortense that her whole heart was his. For an hour, as they sat in that moon-lit arbor of roses and flowers, the joyous utterances of pent-up love, now overflowing, drove back and drowned every thought that dare approach to shade

the happiness that seemed just then so complete. Now voices are heard in the hall, and Hortense hears her name called by a merry, light-hearted little sister, who is evidently looking for her. The lovers start from their seat and the dream they are lost in. One passionate exchange of vows of fidelity, and, with a kiss to seal all, Leidesdorff finds himself rushing down the street, he knows not whither, and upbraiding himself in excited terms as a dishonorable man for telling his love before he had told his, now to him, horrid secret. All night he struggled with himself to summon courage to reveal it to Hortense's father the next morning. Yes; he believed he had succeeded, and with brave resolution early next day he approached the counting-house of Mr. L. He was received with 154 great cordiality by that gentleman, and, after a sort of an embarrassed pause, he asks Mr. L. for a private interview. It was granted with cheerful politeness. The moment they were alone, Leidesdorff began to beg for pardon for an indiscretion he said he had been guilty of, in allowing himself to so far forget the rules of society as to have spoken to Miss L. of marriage, without first obtaining her father's consent to do so. He explained that it was not a premeditated fault, but one he had been surprised into by an accidental circumstance.

The father here interrupted him, and in an off-hand manner assured him that he had the utmost confidence in his honor, and was fully satisfied with his explanation, and that no disrespect was meant, and concluded by saying that if Mrs. Leidesdorff and his daughter both favored his suit, it should also have his hearty concurrence.

In the joy of hearing these words, Leidesdorff forgot his secret, and, grasping Mr. L.'s hand, he poured out the warmest thanks for the kind manner in which he had been received. Now his secret came back to him, but all courage to reveal it was gone. Before parting with Hortense's father, it was settled that he should call the next day at Mr. L.'s residence for his final answer. Yes; to-morrow, when he called, he would confess his secret, and so he planned and so he believed he would do, as he turned his head from side to side all that night on a pillow where he found no sleep. He did call at the appointed hour, and found himself received without formality by the whole household as the accepted lover of the darling of the house. Again the good resolution failed, and, yielding to the enchanting sweets of the moment, he revealed nothing. Now he tried to drive the voice of honor, ever whispering reproaches, out of hearing, and to give up thoughts of ever telling

his secret. He placed a beautiful diamond ring on the finger of his betrothed. Nearly every evening found him by her side. The marriage day was fixed, and with charming blushes Hortense asked him to assist in some of the preparations. When with her he was happy to intoxication; when away, his secret would come and sink him to the depths of misery. Day by day the voice of honor grew louder and louder. He became pale and haggard, and now Hortense began to see the change, for sometimes his manner, even to her, became excited and incoherent. Then she summoned courage to speak to him about it. At first he avoided her 155 questions. Then, in a moment of anguish, he acknowledged he had a secret that he dare not tell her. Then her gentle words of entreaty, to be allowed to share it, fell upon his feverish ear, one day. He answered by exclaiming: “Oh, yes, Hortense; I must tell it to you some day, or it will kill me, so prepare yourself to hear it.”

“I am prepared now, William,” she said.

“Well, but I have not the courage to-day, Hortense; to-morrow you shall know it, if I live.”

That night Leidesdorff dreamed that his benefactor appeared to him and reproached him with the dishonor of withholding the secret from Hortense and her family. He awoke with a cold perspiration streaming from every pore. Now a firm determination to reveal all came to his mind, such as he had never before felt. That evening found him alone with Hortense. He was remarkably calm in his manner, but the keen eyes of Hortense detected the true state of his mind, hidden beneath this unusual calmness. Her heart sank from an undefined apprehension. This she tried to shake off, and walked to the piano, saying, with an effort to smile pleasantly: “Here, Willie, I have been practicing a new song; let me sing it for you.”

Without waiting for an answer, she let her fingers fall on the keys of the instrument, and, after a brilliant prelude, raised her voice in a song with more power and sweetness than he had ever thought could come from human voice. The song told a sad story of disappointed love, and was mournful beyond conception, and as she sang Hortense's whole soul seemed poured out in sympathy with the theme of the song. Leidesdorff always said, when telling of this circumstance, that, when in any sort of difficulty in after life, he could plainly hear Hortense singing that song,

and that it never wholly left his ears. As she finished singing, she turned to look on her lover. He sat as pale as death, with his eyes fixed on hers, in admiration in which there was a mixture of terror.

“Oh, I have frightened you with that sad song, I see; but never mind, William, I but followed a foolish inclination in singing it, for do you know,” and here she dropped her voice almost to a whisper, “I dreamed last night that I sang that song for you, and that you then told me your secret, and that it was the last song I ever sang in my life. How strange, was it not? Now, tell me the secret. That song, you know, is the spell that I use to extort it from you.” And again she tried to smile, but it faded away in an instant, and a visible tremor passed over her frame.

Leidesdorff seemed transfixed and speechless, and Hortense continued: “William, keep your promise, and let me share the secret with you. It will be as safe with your Hortense, you know, as with yourself.”

Leidesdorff said, in describing this scene, that he felt then as if in fact under a spell that he could not resist. That song, it appeared to him, came from a heart he was condemned to break. He could endure the crowding sensations oppressing him no longer. He arose to his feet, and clasping his hands on his face, groaned as if in bodily pain. Then, suddenly turning to Hortense, he dropped on his knees before her, exclaiming, as he uncovered his haggard, white face, now showing plainly the dark blue shade around his handsome forehead: “Oh, hear me, Hortense; and, if you can, forgive and pity me.” Hortense sat as motionless as a statue—the picture of terror, her dark, burning bright eyes alone showing life as they rested on the kneeling figure before her. “I have never,” he continued, “been guilty of one dishonorable or dishonest act in my whole life; my father was the good Englishman who sent me here to my great benefactor, who was in fact my uncle. I was born in wedlock, as I have the proofs to show in my possession, though my father never openly acknowledged the marriage with my mother, for my poor mother, though virtuous, pure and good”—here he stopped, and hesitated, then in a low, husky voice continued—“was of negro blood—was a mulatto; and this is my secret, and my only crime is not having revealed it to you long ago. Oh, speak, Hortense, speak and say you do not despise and spurn me for this accident of my birth. No other woman did I ever love. No other woman can I ever love.” Pale and

trembling, Hortense struggled for utterance, but seemed at first unable to command it. She clasped her hands on her forehead as if to steady her brain, and then with a start she sprang to her feet, and, leaning down over her yet kneeling lover, she whispered close to his ear: "William, all is lost; my dream is out. I have sung my last song, just as I dreamed. There is a chasm between us; father will never yield, and, though my heart will break, I will never sully the honor of his house by a child's disobedience. No; our dream of happiness is all over! Fly, William, 157 Fly, for hark! I hear father's step approaching, and you must not meet him now, or anger might make him forget what is due to us both. "Fly, fly, fly!" she continued, in wild excitement. "We part forever!" Here she stopped, and, grasping his hand pressing it close over her heart, continued: "Feel how my heart beats; every pulsation is for you, and will be for you, William, until death comes to still it. Yes; I once pledged it to you, and it is yours in defiance of the scorn of my whole proud race. Go; fly, William, fly!"

The next day Leidesdorff received a package from Hortense's father, enclosing all the presents he had ever made Hortense, including, of course, the magnificent diamond engagement ring poor Hortense had received with such joy. With the package came a formal note dissolving all acquaintance between Leidesdorff and the family of the proud man. This freezing note aroused Leidesdorff from the moping lethargy into which the parting scene with Hortense had sunk him. Stung to the quick, he felt himself insulted and dishonored, and knowing, full well, that from this day forward he would be classed in New Orleans with the degraded race to which his mother in part belonged, he at once determined to leave that city forever. He sold out all his property, bought a fine ship, and freighted her with goods, intending to find a new home on the shores or islands of the far-off, lonesome Pacific Ocean. A day or two before his ship was ready for sea, he was hurrying down Canal street, on his way to the river where his ship lay, when suddenly a funeral came in sight. To avoid passing it, he stepped into a dry goods store just at hand. The white, waving plumes on the hearse, indicating that it was some one in the pride of youth that had been cut down, caught his eye and caused him to heave a sigh and to look closer at the carriage in mourning that followed. Great Heavens! what did it mean? The foremost carriage was that of the family of L. Turning quickly to the owner of the store, he exclaimed, "My God! whose funeral is that?" "Oh, the funeral of the young lady, Miss L., who came so near being married to a mulatto young man. She

died yesterday, they say, from the shock.” Leidesdorff dropped into a chair near him, and covered his face with his hands in an agony of grief. “Ah, a friend of yours, sir,” said the man, in a soft, pitying voice. Then he poured out a glass of brandy and urged him to take it. Trembling in every limb, Leidesdorff swallowed the drink, and, 158 uttering a few hurried words of thanks to the kind shopkeeper, he rushed down the street to his ship. For all that and the next day he was completely unmanned. Towards the evening of the second day, the priest who had administered the last rites of the Church to poor Hortense called on him. The priest came, he said, to fulfill a promise he had made Hortense a few hours before her death. That promise was, to bring Leidesdorff a little gold crucifix she had always worn from childhood, and repeat to him sweet consoling messages in proof of her love and truth to the last. These messages seemed to arouse young Leidesdorff once more to new life, and with a brave, if not cheerful heart, he threw out to the breeze the snowy canvas of his fine ship, and was soon out on the dark blue sea, where Hortense's spirit seemed ever near him, and the spread-out white sails of his ship were to him like angels' wings wafting him to a western home, where the prejudices dividing races, he hoped, should be unknown.

After years spent in roving from port to port and island to island in the Pacific ocean, circumstances led Leidesdorff to make San Francisco his final resting-place. Here he died in the Summer of 1849, leaving a great deal of valuable real estate in his name, which, on his death, was taken charge of by the Alcalde, as was the custom in such cases, under Mexican law, until the legal heirs should make their appearance. When Captain Folsom soon afterwards went East he visited the islands of Leidesdorff's nativity, and asserted that he had found the Leidesdorff heirs and purchased their right to the San Francisco property for some trifling amount. Many doubted the genuineness of this transaction, and Colonel Geary, then Alcalde of San Francisco, at first refused to give Folsom possession of the property. This point was, however, soon arranged to Colonel Geary's entire satisfaction, and in a most liberal manner on the part of Captain Folsom. He paid Geary ten thousand dollars *as a compromise* for his commissions and fees, and the property was given up to Folsom without further objections on the part of Geary. While Captain Folsom lived he was never entirely quiet in the possession of this vast estate. Many opened attacks on his title, and after making some points in the contest suddenly let the matter drop, to the surprise of lookers-on. After

the death of Captain Folsom the property all fell into the hands of hungry thieves, who devoured it all, with the other property he had 159 accumulated, so that I believe the estate was finally declared insolvent.

The next memoir is that of Thomas O. Larkin. It is interesting and so truthful and modest in its tone that it appears entirely out of place in the “Annals.” The history of California could not be correctly written and omit the name of Thomas O. Larkin from its pages. His whole career as a California pioneer and American citizen is without spot or blemish, so far as I ever heard.

Then come the memoir of General Sutter, whose connection with California pioneer history makes him famous. The memoir of him found in the “Annals” amounts to nothing, though he was deserving of much.

Then comes the memoir of General Vallejo. It is short, and in that respect is all the better for this old fox.

Then comes the memoir of Edward Gilbert, whose early death we all so mourned. First, because by his death we lost as true a California pioneer as ever stepped on our shores. Secondly, because that life was lost through an act of folly. In giving this memoir of Mr. Gilbert, the authors of the “Annals” make one curious remark which is worthy of quoting:

“The war had then been terminated, and it became necessary to select a civilian to act as Collector of the Port.*****

“The late General Mason, U.S. Army, then acting as Governor of the territory, appointed Mr. Gilbert to that office. This he declined. By doing so he voluntarily lost an opportunity of amassing a large fortune in a very short time. Mr. Harrison, who was subsequently appointed, having been the recipient of enormous revenues, through the opportunities given him by virtue of the office of getting possession of property, was soon made almost, if not quite, a millionaire.”

Nothing we ever knew of Edward Gilbert would lead us to suppose that, had he accepted the Collectorship, he would have appropriated funds belonging to the Government to his own use, yet from that above quotation it would seem as though the “Annals” men thought he would have done so as a matter of course. In this they did that brave, honorable young man a great injustice.

Then comes the memoirs of several very nice gentlemen, in all respects good citizens and full as well deserving of being paraded as notables in the “Annals of San Francisco” as were at least three thousand other gentlemen whose names could have been taken from the city directory of those days, but who would not pay to have themselves thus advertised.

160

Poor Theodore Payne, one of these “Annals” heroes, deserves a passing remark, as he was on the ill-fated Central America when she foundered at sea, and had the distinction of being one of the two beings calling themselves men who begged of the captain to let them leave with the women and children, by which they saved their valuable lives. The “Annals” gives a woodcut of Payne's auction house, in San Francisco, where he and his friend Michael Reese put many a poor fellow's city lot through by a wink and a nod, in those days of fast and loose in California.

Then comes a memoir of Colonel J. D. Stevenson. All old Californians will, I am sure, indorse every word of praise bestowed on him. The Colonel was truly a bold, dashing, patriotic officer, and as such can alone be mentioned in the history of pioneer times in California.

Then comes the memoir of William M. Gwin, which is but a modest historic summary of his life up to the time of his coming to California, and is presumed to be correct in every respect. It might be added that it was related of Dr. Gwin that, in the latter part of the year 1848, he was seated, one evening, in his own family circle, in Nashville, Tennessee, engaged in a game of whist, when the discovery of gold in California came up for discussion, and that Mrs. Gwin, his very accomplished wife, exclaimed: “Doctor, I have just thought of it; you must be off to California at once and organize a State government there, and get yourself elected United States Senator from the new State.” Be this as it may, it is undoubtedly true that the Doctor did come, and that from the date of

his arrival among us he devoted his whole time to the organizing of a State government, and that he was elected United States Senator. He made a most valuable representative; always attentive, prompt, and kind to all Californians who needed his services at the National Capital, making no distinction between Republicans and Democrats in this respect. True and loyal to California in all things, her interest has never been watched with more jealous care than it was while Dr. Gwin was our Senator. His career as a California politician, in connection with that of David C. Broderick, will be a most interesting chapter in the political history of our State, should it ever be written.

On the breaking out of the rebellion, Senator Gwin made, as we all thought, the great mistake of his life, in going South, 161 which he did in company with many other Southern-born men. The will of California, his adopted State that had so honored him, we felt should have controlled his action. He was identified with every line of her American history, and this step of his looked to us like desertion. At the close of the rebellion he went to Mexico, giving his enemies another opportunity to personally attack him and make it appear that he had thrown himself into the wake of that donkey, Maximilian, who met what will always be regarded as a just fate at the hands of an outraged people, hundreds of whom he had put to death in cold blood while prisoners in his hands, on the pretence that they were rebels or traitors to his government. Thus it is that our old Senator has brought upon a career, otherwise brilliant, a sort of shadow or cloud that it seems hard to clear away; though none of us can ever forget his fidelity to our State and his untarnished reputation as an honest and honorable man, who left office as poor in pocket as he was the day he was elected Senator by the California Legislature, in San Jose, in 1849. Senator Gwin is now residing in San Francisco with his charming family, quietly enjoying the ample income of one of the best mining properties in our State, developed by the perseverance and untiring energy of his son William.

The "Annals" write up as a notable Jacob P. Leese, and in doing so they try to give the impression that to write the history of San Francisco and California correctly and omit J. P. Leese was impossible. According to the "Annals," Leese was the hero of the first settlement in San Francisco, the master of the first American feast given there, and the father of the first child born there. All this is humbug. Leese's career in California was entirely selfish, and in no particular was it worth noticing in connection with the early history of our State. This first baby business the authors of the

“Annals” are fond of recording. They tell us that Mrs. Larkin was the mother of the first American child in California, that Mrs. Leese was the mother of the first child in San Francisco, that Mrs. Geary was the mother of the first *American* child in San Francisco. All this would be interesting if its untruth was not so plain as to make it absurd. The close of Leese's career in California illustrates the old adage, “Praise no man until he is dead”—but of this, out of respect to a large and worthy family left by Leese in Monterey county, I will say nothing.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA PIONEERS—THEIR INDORSEMENT OF THE “ANNALS.”—“WOMAN's RIGHTS.”—TRUE SPHERE OF A WOMAN—RESOURCES OF CALIFORNIA—NEWSPAPERS, BANKS AND MANUFACTORIES—THE JUDICIARY—THE RAILROADS AND THE NEW CONSTITUTION—CALIFORNIANS WHO HAVE WON LAURELS IN THE EAST—LOSS OF THE CENTRAL AMERICA—RESCUE OF THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN BY THE BRIG “MARINE.”—TERRIBLE PARTINGS—COWARDICE OF TWO MEN—OTHERS SAVED—GENERAL SHERMAN's ACCOUNT—A PASSENGER's STORY.

I think I have said enough to show the true character of this “Annals” book, and to satisfy all that its picture of the first immigrants to California after the discovery of gold, is a false and slanderous one in the extreme. You, my young readers, who are the children of those immigrants, owe it to yourselves to vindicate your parents.

Let every one of you boys who can do so, enroll your names as members of the “Society of California Pioneers,” and then demand the adoption of a formal resolution by the Society, repudiating this book and its dedication to them. Do more. Demand that an amendment be made to the constitution of the Society which will admit as members your mothers, the brave women of the pioneer days, and their female children as well as their male. There is no reason why they should be excluded. Did they not face and share every danger and privation with the men, and was it not more heroic in them to do so than it was in the men? Was not the advent of *one* good, virtuous woman in

those days of more value to the State than the coming of any *twenty* men that ever appeared among us? What is the object of this Society of California Pioneers? Its constitution says:

“To cultivate the social virtues of its members, to collect and preserve information connected with the early settlement and conquest of the country, and to perpetuate the memory of those whose sagacity, enterprise and love of independence induced them to settle in the wilderness and become the germ of a new State.”

What is there in the objects as here laid down that should exclude the women of '49 from membership? Nothing, surely; but everything to point to its entire propriety and fitness.

163

They and their daughters should not only be admitted members, but, in their case, no entrance fee or yearly subscription should be charged. This Society is regarded with great favor and almost affection by all old Californians, even by those who are not members. The Legislature of California has favored it in legislation when required, and many citizens have made it valuable donations. It should be the peculiar guardian of the character and standing of the first immigrants to California. Let it be true to its mission then, and spurn the dedication of a book that is sought to be made attractive only by wholesale slander and misrepresentation of the pioneers. If the *men* of those times had alone been attacked in this book, perhaps I never would have taken up my pen to write these pages. I would most likely, in that case, have been content to let it pass with contempt; but that our female population should be attacked, and those attacks dedicated to the Society of California Pioneers, was a little more than human patience could be expected to endure. For the first ten or fifteen years after the publication of this book, it was let pass unnoticed, for its vagaries and misrepresentations were too well known to us all to make a contradiction seem worth while; and then the flattering memoirs it gave of the many would-be prominent men in San Francisco secured the influence of those gentlemen to prevent criticism; then the old adage of “What is every one's business is no one's business,” came in to help to save it; besides, in these fast, busy years, we all have had our hands full of private business, requiring our whole attention from sunrise to sunset. But now, in this year of our Lord, 1881, the scene is fast changing; our sons and our daughters,

born to us in California, are beginning to take our places in the active duties of life, leaving us time to talk to them and to write to them. The pioneers are fast passing away, so that after a while not a man will be left to contradict the terrible statements of this book, dedicated to the men who should have been the guardians of the honor of the pioneers. A very little while ago, a woman, lecturing in San Francisco, spoke in the most disrespectful manner of the women of '49, quoting from "The Annals of San Francisco" in support of her disrespectful language. Surely, then, it is time for some one to expose this book, and I only regret that an abler pen has not undertaken to do so. But the object is accomplished, in my plain way, when once attention is drawn to the subject. I 164 understand the book is often quoted by lecturers, both in the Eastern States and in England, to show our wholesale moral depravity. The man who would defraud a woman of one right that is justly hers, is a creature without one particle of true manhood; but the man who slanders the character of a woman, or a community of women, is a wretch of the lowest grade of humanity, and should be dealt with accordingly.

I hope that nothing that I have said conveys the idea that I favor that political heresy, the so-called "Woman's Rights" movement, for I not only do not do so, but I look on it with almost contempt, because such a movement must come from men who are incapable of appreciating the character of a *true woman*, when faithfully fulfilling those duties so manifestly assigned to her by God himself. Yes; I look on the movement with pity and regret, because it comes also, in part, from women who, not seeing their true exalted position, seek to degrade themselves to the rough and rugged ways forced upon man, in his fierce battle through the world. God made woman fair and beautiful in person, and endowed her mind and disposition with charms far more alluring and attractive than even those of her person. He gave her a sphere of duties totally different and of a more beautiful, if not of a higher character, than he assigned to man. Men are created rough, strong and stern; unyielding in mind and purpose. To them He assigned the labor of subduing the rugged earth to cultivation and fruitfulness. To them He assigned the defence of the nation, even when it leads to the battlefield, where, without feeling or mercy, they are to cut down and slaughter the national enemy. To them He has assigned the duty of bringing to even-handed justice the wicked and villainous of the community, imprisoning the one and strangling the other, as the safety of

the community may demand. To them He has assigned the duty of enacting the laws necessary to govern the community, from which duty they cannot shrink, though arguments, quarrels and personal strifes may be the consequence, and the necessity sometimes. To them He has plainly given the protection of women from all harm or aspersion of character, in the performance of which they must, if necessary, yield life itself, or be recreant to the great trust reposed in them. To woman is given the exclusive care and control of household duties, for which her loving nature, her quick perception and gentle disposition are all so necessary, so 165 absolutely indispensable. Under her fostering care the simplest surroundings become beautiful and charming. Where woman is there is sure to be all that can refine and elevate our thoughts and aspirations above the groveling things with which our daily duties may compel us to mingle. To woman is given to lessen the austerities of the battlefield, or the terrible fate of the criminal. To her is especially given the care of the unfortunate of both sexes. To her is given the divine mission of bringing to the household the joyous presence of children, and to her watchful care and Heaven-inspired, unselfish, devoted love are assigned all the young years of those children, to form and adorn their characters with all that shall make them pleasing to God, and valuable members of the community in which they live. Above all good gifts, it is given to woman to excel in her devotion, piety and faith in God. To her is given the power, the duty to beckon back to the paths of rectitude and virtue erring men; for to her persuasive, gentle words the proudest man will often listen when he has scorned all others.

From this sphere of glorious duties, so necessary to the well-being of the community, shall we take gentle woman and thrust her rudely into the field of party politics, with its wrangling and bitter contentions?—a field that even strong, rough men feel loth to enter, for there the bitterest hates and enmities are often engendered, degrading to all. Never, I trust, shall such a thing be permitted, while woman respects herself, and man values and honors her as he has a right to do. It is a woman's right that every avenue to profitable employment suitable for her should be thrown open to her, and, in many cases, *reserved for her by provision of law*. If this were done, women would be more independent in their choice of partners for life, and consequently more happy. This is the sort of “woman's rights” I would most cheerfully join in advocating.

I think I have said enough to satisfy any one that the “Annals of San Francisco” is no authority as to the character of the pioneers, either men or women, and that you, their children, have nothing to be ashamed of in their regard, but much to be proud of. We, the pioneers, feel proud of the great young State we are turning over to your charge. Yes; we are proud, for look at our schools; they are to be found in every nook and corner, so that no boy or girl in the State can have an excuse for not acquiring a reasonably good education. Look at our high 166 schools, academies and colleges, all over the State, both public and private, affording to all the very highest grade of education. Look at the number of California pioneers who have distinguished themselves in the literary world. Look at our book and publishing houses; their great success in business reflects credit on us. We can also claim that the newspaper press of our State, taken as a whole, will compare favorably with that of any other State in the Union. We claim that it is remarkably free from unfairness in its contentions, either in religious or political matters. Of course, there are some exceptions to this, but the exceptions are few, and are generally of so low a character that they are not worth a notice.

We point to the circulation of our daily press as a marvel, and being mostly well deserved a credit to us. Look at our agricultural resources and developments. We already begin to feed the outside world with grain which commands a higher price than that of any other country on earth. Our farmers, too, cannot be surpassed in bold enterprise and skill, that should insure to them success. Look at our infant manufactories. They now, in the character of their products, though of course not in quantity, outrank those of any other State in the Union. Look at our leading mercantile houses and banking institutions; for honor, enterprise and stability they stand first among the first, the world over. In what city in the world do we find such a young giant in the business of banking springing into existence as the Bank of Nevada? It is a California wonder. May success attend the enterprising men who control its destinies.

Look at the judiciary of our State. The judiciary everywhere is a good index by which to judge of the moral worth of the community, for a pure judiciary can only come from a good people. For years our Supreme Bench, taken as a whole, with Wallace as its chief, could challenge comparison with that of any State in the Union.

We have reason to be proud, too, of the brilliant talent of our Bar, where such men as Wallace, McKinstry, McKee, Felton, Patterson, Wilson, McAllister, Hoge, Cohen, Doyle, Haight, Barnes and Casserly, not forgetting the pride of the Workingmen, Clitus Barbour, and many others, have won distinction and more than a State reputation as jurists.

Look at our railroad enterprise. It equals, if it does not excel, that of any State in the Union, or that of any country on earth. 167 We may condemn the policy and management of those railroad men, for beyond all doubt they do many outrageously wrong things; but we cannot help feeling proud of these mighty works that, if managed in the interest of the people, would make our State great and prosperous. Nor are their projectors that class of men who, having made riches among us, rush off to the Eastern cities to spend it. For such no true Californian has my respect, even if they do give a dinner in New York once a year to glorify themselves as Californians. As to the railroad question, now so agitating to the public mind, the trouble comes from the fact that our means of transportation and locomotion are put into the hands of corporations, which gives the corporations a power over us by which they can make us the veriest slaves that ever served a master. It gives them a power as great almost as if by right they could control the air we breathe or the water we drink. The people will soon wake and comprehend the remedy, which is to take the ownership of all railroads into their own hands and run them exclusively in the interest of the people and the State. The new Constitution, just adopted, made a bold effort to control the exactions of the railroad monopolies, by providing for a Board of Commissioners, with full power to do so. But the Commissioners elected by the people have proven recreant to the great trust reposed in them. Two of them, with perfidy unequalled in the political history of our State, having openly deserted the people, and now, with shameless impudence, exhibit themselves as pliant tools in the hands of that great monopoly. That these creatures are despised by all good men, is no relief to the pillaged people.

If there is one location on earth a California '49er loves more than another, it is that of, to him, dear San Francisco; that proud young city of the Pacific coast. It is identified with all the trials, hopes and joys of his early manhood's struggle for an honorable position in life; and, no matter where

his lot may be cast, San Francisco holds a place in his memory that it is sweet for him to dwell on. Her growth and prosperity is a pride to every true '49er. To you, boys of San Francisco, I take the liberty of a '49er, who did his part in helping to lay the foundation of your prosperous city, to suggest to you to improve her dress by sweeping from her streets, by enactment of law, with one dash, the names of her despoilers and her "no-bodies;" and replace them with the names of our old patriot 168 Presidents and the names of the Eastern States of the Union. Your doing this will bring a home feeling and a respectability to each of the streets now burdened with the name of a thief or a scalawag. At the time Eddy made his map of the city he took the authority upon himself of naming the streets. He first named one for each of the members of the gang of worthies for whom he worked, of course saddling one with his own name. He then gave out that for a basket of champagne or three gallons of whisky "anybody" could have a street called after him. In this way the little rascal kept himself half drunk for about a year. Go to work, boys, and do not let an unworthy name rest as a blight on a street in your city. In all the future guard her from the schemes of grasping, selfish men, and when you find there is danger and you are hard pressed, call on the boys of the whole State to help you; and fear not, for your call will be responded to, as in those days when she was saved by Governor Downey from wholesale robbery. We leave you a city and a State in a high state of prosperity. Do not fear to send them ahead with every inch of canvas spread; if you only keep the right man at the helm, all will go well. A few breakers or sunken rocks lurk treacherously beneath the waters ahead of you, always there, though only showing themselves much in stormy weather. They are the Chinese curse, the unsolved railroad problem, the growing power of all the monopolies, over-taxation, unfairness in its levy, and the craving for public office that besets so many of our young men. These dangers avoided or overcome, nothing can stop your onward career to a position of greatness never attained by any nation on earth.

There is a fact connected with the early settlement of this State which is complimentary. It is the marked favor with which returned Californians were always received in the Eastern States. Notably, we may point to Fremont, whose connection with California nearly made him President of the United States in 1856; John W. Geary, who became Governor of Pennsylvania; Rodman M. Price, who was elected to Congress from New Jersey and was afterwards her Governor; Caleb Lyons, an

eccentric little man, who claimed the credit of fashioning the great seal of California—and it was all he ever did, if he did that, while in California, to make himself known on his return to his native town in the State of New York—was elected to Congress, I think, three times 169 in succession, and then got some government appointment. John Hackett, who practiced law in San Francisco for two or three years, on returning to New York, was for many years elected Recorder of that city. There was James W. White, who practiced law in San Francisco one year; on returning to New York was elected Judge of the Superior Court of that city. There was Benard, well known in this State, who, on returning to New York, was also placed on the Bench. I could fill a whole chapter with the names of favored returned Californians, without going into the military department, where we would find Sherman, Grant, Halleck and a host of others, who were once identified with California as civilians.

The loss of the Central America, on the Atlantic side, which occurred on September the 20th, 1857, serves to show what sort of material went to make up the true Californian. For brave, cool courage, under the most trying circumstances, they cannot, we believe, be surpassed by any people on the face of the earth. This steamer was on her trip from Panama to New York, filled with Californians, men, women and children. She sprung a leak off Cape Hatteras, which it was found impossible to stanch or overcome. After the most desperate and heroic efforts of the Captain and officers, the attempt to keep her up was abandoned. Just at that moment came in sight the brig Marine, Captain Hiram Burt. She was signaled, and soon ran alongside the Central America. This brig was so small and her accommodations so limited in every way that all she could do was to offer to take all the women and children. This was accepted by Captain Harndon, of the Central America, who was as brave a man as ever stepped on deck of ship. Then a scene was enacted that challenges the history of the world for its match in cool courage and unwavering fortitude. The Captain announced to the assembled passengers that the steamer could not float more than half an hour, and that the brig Marine, alongside, could only take the women and children. “Now,” said he, “get your wives and children and every woman on board ready, and I will put them on the brig, and we men will shift for ourselves the best we can, trusting in God to aid us.”

Every man present assented, calling out cheerfully: "All right, Captain, all right; we are satisfied."

The women along objected, calling out: "Oh, Captain, that is too terrible. Let us stay, and all die together."

170

The Captain silenced all their cries by declaring that if the women wanted to give the men any chance for their lives, they would at once obey orders implicitly and go on board the brig. This brought acquiescence and prompt obedience from the women. Then came the quick and terrible parting of father and child, husband and wife, brother and sister, as terrible to them all as death itself. It cannot be imagined, much less described. Among all the men two only proved cowardly, and the Captain, with expressions of contempt, ordered them on board the brig with the women. The story of this steamer is well worth reading. My space will not permit me to say more of it. The Marine, with the women and children, it will be found, reached Norfolk, Virginia, in safety, where nothing could surpass the affectionate kindness of the people of that old town towards them all. A Swedish bark picked up some seventy of the men. General Sherman, in his memoirs, on page 135, gives the following account of the saving of these men, which is interesting:

"In the midst of this panic came the news that the steamer Central America, formerly the George Law, with six hundred passengers and \$1,600,000 of treasure, coming from Aspinwall, had foundered at sea off the coast of Georgia, and that about sixty of the passengers had been providentially picked up by a Swedish bark, and brought into Savannah. The absolute loss of this treasure went to swell the confusion and panic of the day.

"A few days after, I was standing in the restaurant of the Metropolitan Hotel, and heard the Captain of the Swedish bark tell his singular story of the rescue of these passengers. He was a short, sailor-like looking man, with a strong German or Swedish accent. He said he was sailing from some port in Honduras for Sweden, running down the gulf stream, off Savannah. The weather had been heavy for some days, and about nightfall, as he paced his deck, he observed a man-of-war hawk circle about his vessel, gradually lowering until the bird was, as it were, aiming at him. He jerked out

a belaying-pin, struck at the bird, and missed it, when the hawk again rose high in the air, and a second time began to descend, contract his circle and make at him again. The second time he hit the bird and struck it to the deck. This strange fact made him uneasy, and he thought it betokened danger. He went to the binnacle, saw the course he was steering, and, without any particular reason, he ordered the steersman to alter the course one point to the east.

“After this it became quite dark, and he continued to promenade the deck, and had settled into a drowsy state, when, as in a dream, he thought he heard voices all round his ship. Waking up, he saw at the side of his ship, something struggling in the water, and heard clearly cries for help. 171 Instantly heaving his ship to and lowering his boats, he was able to pick up sixty or more persons, who were floating about on skylights, doors and whatever fragments remained of the Central America. Had he not changed the course of his vessel by reason of the mysterious conduct of the man-of-war hawk, not a soul would probably have survived the night.”

General Sherman, in writing his memoirs, had evidently forgotten the circumstance of the brig Marine saving the women and children, as he makes no mention of it, and says that all but those saved by the Swedish brig were lost.

One of the passengers saved, in giving the narration of the disaster, says:

“I was standing on the after part of the steamer with a life-preserver on, undecided how to act, when suddenly the vessel seemed to tremble all over, as if in fear, and then she made a dive forward and went to the bottom. I, of course, went with her, ingulfed in the roaring, closing waters. Down, down I went, as if to follow her; then suddenly I felt myself stop descending, and now I shot up as rapidly as I had descended, until my body fairly leaped out of the sea. As my head cleaved the water, I heard my mother's voice, as plainly as I ever heard it in my life, saying, ‘Oh, Henry, how could you eat your sister's grapes?’ Twenty years before, when a mere boy, I had a poor, sick sister, dying of consumption, for whom some grapes had been procured, I suppose with great difficulty. On coming across them, boy-like, I eat them; and that was my mother's exclamation on discovering what I had done. Others of the passengers who had made the same terrible dive I had, had the same

strange experience on reaching the surface of the foaming sea. They believed they heard distinctly all around them voices familiar only in long past years.”

The London *Times* newspaper, after giving the particulars of this shipwreck, concludes its remarks on it with the exclamation, “Americans, be proud of your countrymen!” And I say to you, my young readers, “Be proud of the California pioneers.”

There is another fact worthy of note that we Californians have to be proud of. It is the superior moral tone of our first-class theatrical amusements; for it is a fact, that all our stage managers will attest, that of late years in the most fashionable theaters of New York and other Eastern cities, plays are put on the stage, without objection, that would disgust and scatter a 172 California audience. Californians are too proud and independent in their characters to be willing to sacrifice their sense of moral right for the sake of aping the immodest exhibitions of second-class French theaters. My dear young readers, in all the future ever foster and guard this purity of taste in your public amusements which now marks our people. It is a glorious distinction, upon which you cannot set too high a value.

CHAPTER XV.

FASCINATION OF PIONEER TIMES—ANECDOTES AND STORIES IN ILLUSTRATION.

I will devote the remaining pages of this volume to anecdotes and stories that I think will convey to you a vivid picture of our pioneer times in California, without requiring you to wade through any dry descriptions. There was a spirit of off-hand, jolly fun in those days, that I want you to comprehend. It was neither “brave wickedness” nor “splendid folly,” so praised by the “Annals,” but a sort of universal free and easy cheerfulness, that encouraged all sorts of drollery and merriment to show themselves continually, mixed up with the sober realities of our daily life. The California pioneer that could not give and take a joke was just no Californian at all. Business that was transacted without some fun cropping out was dry and disagreeable. It was this spirit that gives

the memory of those days that indescribable fascination and charm, which we all feel when looking back to our pioneer life.

I had collected many anecdotes to give in illustration of this point, but my space compels me to lay several of them aside. The few I give, together with the three stories of “Ellen Harvey,” “Ada Allen” and “Minnie Wagner,” will, I hope, be sufficient to shade this characteristic of our people into my picture, and make it, as a whole, agreeably complete.

The anecdotes are just as repeated to me in the neighborhood of their occurrence.

The story of Ellen Harvey, I take from the following circumstance:

A young married lady arrived from the East, on one of the Panama steamers, in 1850. She came to join her husband, who was in business in a town in the interior. Before her husband arrived from his place of business, a lady who had known her at home called to see her while she was yet on board the steamer, and told her some stories that were current of her husband's 174 unfaithfulness. This threw the young wife into the bitterest and most passionate grief. She was of one of the first families of her native city, beautiful, of a high order of intellect, and of the most delicate purity of character. She refused to see her husband, except he could assure her of the falsity of the charges made against him. This, it appears, he was unable wholly to do. So the wife demanded of the Captain of the steamer on which she had arrived, that he would let her remain on board and take her back with him to Panama on his return. The husband heard that the Captain had consented to this arrangement, and for doing so he sent him a challenge. The Captain refused to fight, and made an explanation fully satisfactory. The parties, husband and wife, were both Catholics, and resort was had to a Catholic priest for guidance and advice. This priest turned out to be an old friend of the lady's family. Long negotiations ensued, which resulted in a reconciliation in every way, except their immediate re-union. The wife was to return East and live with the husband's mother until the husband could follow her, which he was to do in a reasonable time. And so it was said that they parted, without even meeting each other in San Francisco. These circumstances were only known to

a few who were more or less connected with the shipping interest of that day, but wherever known they aroused a feeling of the deepest sympathy for the parties.

I was very much interested myself at the time, and in some years afterwards I obtained full notes of the personal history of both husband and wife from the lady's cousin, with whom I was well acquainted. From these notes I have woven this story, keeping the main facts, as related to me, strictly in view. The Susan March scene, and her history, is almost literally true. It was related to me by "Black Bob," the washerwoman's husband.

The story of "Ada Allen" is all through nothing more than a grouping of actual occurrences, many of which were related to me by Captain Casserly, and are only altered and changed in the story to avoid offensive intrusion on individual private history.

Mrs. Doctor Bucket, and some others of the characters brought into this story, may be recognized by old Californians, or by the parties themselves, but I hope not in an offensive way to any of them.

The story of Minnie Wagner is of the same character in all respects.

175

The Mrs. Lightheal of this story is no fictitious character. Nor is that of Johnny Lucky. He will be recalled to memory by many '49ers, and it may be owing to his wild stories that in 1850 there was a floating rumor in San Francisco, traceable to no very good authority, that a pirate ship had been fitted out in Sidney, under the command of a cashiered officer of the British navy, intended to intercept and capture the steamer conveying gold from San Francisco to Panama. That such a story was current about that time is certain, but how it got afloat is hard to determine.

When Johnny got in one of his talkative moods he always said he came to San Francisco in a pirate ship; that she anchored near Saucelito, and that her captain was murdered by his first officer and one of his sailors in a desperate fight on shore, on a cliff of high land that he used to point out, a mile or so west of the old watering place of Saucelito, and about half way between there and Point

Caballo, where the United States has since erected a fortification. This cliff we used to call “Pirates' Point.”

In company with a friend, I paid a visit to this spot many years ago, and again very lately. It is about eighty or one hundred feet above the water of the bay. When first I saw it, I should think it extended out about forty yards further than it does now. It then shelved out over the bay, resting, it seemed, securely on a huge rock. A luxurious growth of grass and wild flowers covered the ground, beneath a grove of young oaks, making the location romantic and unsurpassingly beautiful. On the very outer edge stood an old oak tree, yielding, in its lifelong struggle with the merciless prevailing west wind, until its half bare branches almost touched the ground. This was the tree that was so connected with the murder that saved Minnie's and her brother's lives. When I saw it on the first visit, there was a piece of rope, said to have been part of the one used by the infuriated mate, yet fastened around its trunk. On my recent visit I discovered that the great supporting rock had given way, perhaps shaken from its bed by some of our earthquake shocks; and with it had gone a large piece of the point. The other surroundings are all exactly as of old. I found the name “Brown” cut in the bark of one of the little oaks yet standing near the edge of the cliff as it is now shaped. I mused over it a moment. “Yes; Brown was the name of Lusk's friend, lost, as 176 we supposed, in the Blue Bell. Can it be that he escaped, after all, and, impelled by some unaccountable influence, had come to visit this spot and cut his name on that tree.” Though I rejected this idea as absurd, yet, as I walked away from the cliff, a queer, mysterious feeling seemed to come over me, which it took hours to shake off.

Should any of my fair readers, when roaming in that beautiful and romantic neighborhood, be incited to visit “Pirates' Point,” they will recognize it by the mysterious name cut in the little oak. But let their visit be in the bright, warm sunshine of springtime, when, as they cross the rippling, crystal little brook at the foot of the hill, from which the point makes out over the bay, they will be charmed to kneel and drink of its invigorating and inspiring waters. Yes; when every bush they pass is all music, so filled is it with the sweet notes of the California linnet and meadow lark. Yes; let their visit be when the ground beneath their feet is covered with a carpet woven of wild flowers and luxuriant grass, and more beautiful than ever came from Eastern loom. Then will their imagination

bring before them Minnie, in all her beauty of person, covered with the priceless jewels of truth, fidelity and unwavering trust in God, that so lit up the gloom in the darkest hour of trial, and guided her own and her brother's steps in safety through every difficulty that beset their pioneer life. No, they must not visit that spot in the somber months of the year, or when, at the approach of night, it is mantled in a gloomy fog, rushing in from the lonesome sea; for then their imagination could only picture a frightful scene of strife and murder, made inexpressibly hideous by the low muttered curses and imprecations they would fancy they heard uttered by the murderers and the murdered, above which would seem in sight the dark eyes of Lizzie Lawson, fixed with unrelenting gaze on her false lover, as her father dragged him step by step to the fearful cliff. Yes; and as they turned away frightened by the vision, the gloom on that spot is sure to bring to the imagination, they would fancy they heard the cry of anguish from poor Agnes Ward's spirit, as her child was forced by an unpitying hand to the dark doom he so well deserved.

I did not draw on my imagination for Minnie's escape from the gamblers on the Sacramento river steamer. It was related to me by Jim Becket, at one time prince of sports in San Francisco. Just before he left the State he sauntered one morning into 177 my place of business. He looked sad and gloomy. I said, as I looked up from the box of goods I was packing:

“Why, Jim, you look as if you had just come from a funeral.”

“Worse than that,” said he.

“Why, what is up, Jim? You generally look happy. What can have happened you?”

He then went on to tell me that he had just come back from a visit to a lady to whom he had once been of great service. I became interested, and asked him to come into my private office and tell me all about it. I always liked this man. I never was in his gambling room, or turned a card with him in my life, but somehow he fancied me and did nearly all his private business through me, and then he always advised me ‘never to touch a card.’ So it was natural I should like him, particularly as I always found him strictly honorable and truthful in all business transactions. After we were

seated and had lit our cigars he gave the story of Minnie's escape, as I have given it in the story, concluding with:

“Well, I have just been to Oregon, and, finding where she was living with her husband, I wrote a line from Portland to know if a visit from a man like me would be agreeable. In reply I got a letter from her husband with as cordial an invitation as if he was my brother. So the next day I took the steamer for his locality, and they met me at the landing with a carriage and the warmest welcome. For a whole week they treated me, at their beautiful home, as if I was a prince and a brother, too. I tell you, Grey,” he continued, “that week gave me a taste of Heaven, and I grew more disgusted at my way of life than I ever was before. Yet Minnie; yes, I call her Minnie, for she refused to let me call her anything else, never directly asked me to change to a better mode of living, but somehow everything she did for me and said to me seemed to ask me to do so. She taught her beautiful little child to call me “Uncle James.” On leaving, they brought me back to the landing in their carriage, and we parted, I suppose, never to meet again, as I am about to return to Baltimore, and I feel miserable ever since I left them; yes, miserable to think how unworthy I was to be so treated by the most beautiful, the most intelligent, and the best woman in America, and by her husband, who is as good a man as she is a woman.”

178

Very soon after this conversation Becket left the State. I recollect seeing his name in the Eastern newspapers as connected with large bets on President Buchanan's election, and later still we heard of his death. Poor Jim! If he had his grave faults, he had many redeeming points as well.

In concluding this recital of the facts upon which my stories are woven, I will state that the character of Lusk cannot be classed as fictitious, for an Englishman of fine personal appearance and good education, claiming a parentage exactly such as that of Lusk, figured among the Sydney men, in 1851, in San Francisco, and disappeared, no one knows where or how.

CHAPTER XVI.

A CALIFORNIA MISER—A SPECULATION IN HOGS—A MARRIAGE OF A BASHFUL WOMAN—A LIFE SAVED BY NEW YORK LAW—A LAWYER'S FIRST APPEARANCE IN COURT—A GOOD SPEECH RESERVED—SQUATTERS DISPERSED BY REFUSING TO TALK—A CASE WON BY USING AN IRISH AUTHORITY—A “DIVIDE” WITH ROBBERS AND LAWYERS—DAN MURPHY LOSES HIS CASH.

The people of California are admitted by all to be remarkable for their liberality in their expenditure of wealth. They are liberal to all sorts of charities, to churches and schools. They are liberal in small matters as well as in large. The collections taken up at a church on Sundays in San Francisco would astonish the vestry people of any church in New England, or even in New York. In San Francisco, in old times a “quarter” or a “half” was the least dropped into the contribution-box on Sundays. No man in California ever used a nickel, much less a copper cent; and many of you, my young readers, I presume have never seen either; ten cents being generally the lowest coin in use among us.

In all my experience I only knew one miser in California, and that was John P. Davidson. It was strange, too, that Davidson was a miser, for he was born in Ireland, and from early boyhood was brought up in Kentucky—two countries proverbial for lavish hospitality and open-handed liberality. He was so well known in early times to many in San Francisco, that a little of his history, I think, is worth giving, particularly as it will help out my picture of pioneer days in some essential points.

Davidson was tall, and rather a good looking man; tolerably well educated, and was, at one time, captain of a fine steamer on the Mississippi river. He was of a decidedly religious turn of mind, and this put some of his acts of questionable honesty in a ludicrous point of view to lookers on. The truth was that his miserly, grasping disposition so controlled him that he found it 180 hard to keep himself honest, and sometimes he failed in doing so outright. While in San Francisco he was a member of Rev. Mr. Williams' Presbyterian church, and always very regular in his attendance on Sundays; but somehow he never recollected to have a coin in his pocket for the contribution box, though somewhat a rich man.

One Sunday afternoon Mr. Williams gave out that the following Sunday a brother clergyman would preach in his pulpit for a charitable object, and requested that every member of his church should come prepared to respond to the call on their liberality, provided they liked the object. The following Sunday I was in my store, with the doors closed, of course, preparing myself for church and my Sunday's walk over the sandhills, when a loud knocking came at the door. I opened it in a hurry. There stood my friend Davidson. He explained to me the request Mr. Williams had made the Sunday before, and said that he was on his way to church, but found he had no money within reach, and requested me to lend him some. I explained that my partner was out with the key of the safe, but added that what I drew from my pocket, some four or five dollars in small change, was at his service, but was, I feared, too small to be of any use to him. In the change, it so happened that there was, to us, the useless little coin of five cents. "Oh, my dear sir," said Davidson, "this is quite sufficient," reaching out his hand as he spoke, and as I supposed for all the change I offered; but no, he placed his forefinger on the little stranger, the five cent piece, and walked off with it with a most satisfied expression of countenance. He evidently admired the size of the coin exceedingly for such an occasion. Late in the afternoon I lay stretched on the counter, my head on some open blankets, for a rest, when again I was aroused by a loud knocking on the store door. I unlocked it, and there stood my friend Davidson with his hand stretched out, and the identical little five cent piece between his forefinger and thumb. "I did not like the object, sir," said he; "no, I did not like the object; so I brought the money back."

It was always said, in San Francisco, that that was the nearest Davidson ever, in his life, came to doing an act of charity that required the outlay of money.

At this time Davidson lived in a room in the second story of a house on Clay street, owned by a Frenchman. His rent was paid one month in advance, in accordance with the universal 181 custom in San Francisco at that time. The Frenchman took it into his head to raise the building, so as to enable him to put a new story underneath. One day Davidson returned, after an excursion in the city, and to his surprise found the building on screws, and already far on its way up, to let the new part into its place. He, at once, in great indignation, applied to the Frenchman to return him his

month's rent. But the Frenchman saw no difficulty in Mr. Davidson's getting to his room, for he said he would always furnish him with a ladder, with which he could mount to the front door while the building was undergoing the alteration. Davidson grew furious, but could not think of sacrificing the month's rent; so he remained, and climbed the Frenchman's ladder every day. He kept bachelor's hall and cooked for himself. One day while engaged in mixing some flour, water and molasses, to make a sort of an impromptu sweetcake, upon which he mostly lived, down came, cracking, the whole building. Poor Davidson! After an hour or so he was dug out of the debris, all unhurt, but all smeared over with flour and molasses. The first thing he observed, on being dragged out, was the little Frenchman capering around him, crying out:

“Oh, Monsieur Davidzon no dead; me one man very glad!”

Davidson looked at him for a moment without speaking, his eyes twinkling out of the flour and molasses with a peculiarly savage ferocity; then he exclaimed:

“You glad? Well, then, will you now pay me back my month's rent?”

“Oh, Monsieur Davidzon, me no pay back one dollar. Me one great loss by one transaction here to-day. You one man very lucky, you no dead.”

Davidson always spoke of that Frenchman as one of the greatest ruffians on the Continent of America.

Davidson had a great inclination to venture in small speculations. He had no head or confidence in himself in such matters, but he found an acquaintance, Mr. Henry Toomy, who was willing to put his brains against his (Davidson's) money, and divide net profits equally. In this way Davidson often made handsomely in little ventures with Toomy. He had one advantage, however, over Toomy, for if they purchased any merchandise that required removal from one part of the city to another, Davidson always did this work himself with a wheelbarrow, after dark, and charged the co-partnership with the full price of the usual 182 drayage, which was a very considerable item at that time in San Francisco. Besides, he often lent Toomy money at two per cent. per week, to

be compounded every Saturday night; so that, on the whole, his connection with Toomy might be regarded as of a very advantageous character.

It so happened that about this time Davidson fell in with a Doctor Somebody, who had been on a cruise among the South Pacific Islands. This man told Davidson that hogs could be got on those Islands for almost nothing. This aroused Davidson's cupidity to the highest, for at that time hogs commanded thirty cents a pound, live weight, in San Francisco.

The Doctor proposed to Davidson to purchase a ship and go for a cargo of those hogs, offering to accompany him for a share of the profits. Davidson feared to venture so large an amount of money in one speculation, but, finding a merchant of the name of West who was willing to put up half the money, the arrangement was made with the Doctor. On looking around for a suitable ship, they found what appeared to be a very fine bark, called the America. She was for sale, and her deck was flush, just the sort of craft, the Doctor said, for the voyage in view. She was owned by two brothers; one was her captain, the other her first officer. They offered her at a very low price, twenty-five hundred dollars. They told Davidson the reason they wanted to sell her, and were willing to take so small an amount, was that they had had a personal difficulty between themselves and wanted to part company, and to do so they must turn the ship into cash. Then the mate told Davidson privately that, if it was agreeable to him, he would like to retain one-third interest in the bark and go to sea in her, in the same position he had when his brother was captain. He cautioned Davidson not to let the brother know of this arrangement, or that he would not consent to let the bark go at so low a figure. Davidson fell into the trap set for him, and bought the bark. After the purchase he waited patiently for the mate to put in his appearance, but he waited in vain, for, on making inquiries, he found that the two brothers had no sooner sold the America than they purchased a fine, new ship for five thousand dollars, and had put to sea once more as captain and mate. The Doctor and Davidson pushed their preparations with energy for the voyage. Under the Doctor's advice, they purchased a quantity of trashy, cheap goods, to trade to the natives of the Islands for 183 hogs; but Davidson and the Doctor did not pull well together, and the more they saw of each other the more they disliked each other.

All went well, however, until one day Davidson detected a bottle of strychnine among the Doctor's private stores. Davidson now became alarmed, and feared the Doctor had a plot on hand to poison him and take the ship, so he positively refused to let the Doctor go to sea with him. The result was that the Doctor and the captain that he had recommended were both sent adrift, and Davidson, shipping a captain of his own choosing, went in search of the hog islands alone. In less than three months the bark America returned with a cargo of oranges and one hundred and seventy-five hogs on the main deck.

Davidson reported to Mr. West that whenever the least rough weather came the America leaked so badly that it was necessary to keep the pumps manned nearly all the time, to clear her of water; so, fearing to proceed, they had run into the island of Bora Bora. Here they found oranges, for which they traded the merchandise. There were hogs here also, but for these the natives demanded coin, and, though Davidson had fifteen hundred dollars in coin with him, he would not part with it. "For," said he, "that I could save in a boat, if the bark went down, but not so the hogs." The hogs he did get only cost him \$175. These he sold to a lawyer named Ryan, somewhat famous as an Irish patriot of 1848. Ryan had made a calculation as to the immense profits of hog raising as the market then stood in California, which dwarfed anything he could hope to make at law, and having the portion of his fortune left after his sacrifices in the cause of Ireland, unemployed, he invested seventeen hundred and fifty dollars of it in Davidson's hogs.

The morning Ryan was to receive them from Davidson, two very large ones were so sick that they could not get on their feet. Captain Davidson feared Ryan would refuse to receive these two as merchantable, so he called his boy John to help him, and they tied the sick hogs' legs fast together. The bark lay out in the bay a few hundred yards from the wharf, to save wharfage, so Ryan had to take away his hogs in a boat. Just as Davidson had finished tying the legs of the invalids, Ryan came alongside and jumped on deck.

"Good morning, friend Ryan; we have just commenced to tie up the hogs for you," was Davidson's polite salutation.

“Oh, thank you, Captain,” said Ryan; and, turning to his men, continued: “Now, lads, be lively at your work; slide these two big fellows the captain has tied up for us over into the boat first and foremost.”

The men did so, and a lot more were tied up and shoved into the boat. On reaching the wharf with this load, Ryan was surprised to find that the two hogs Davidson had tied up were dead. Not knowing the man, a faint hope came to poor Ryan that if Davidson saw the hogs dead he would make some deduction; share the loss, perhaps, or something of that sort; so he ordered the dead hogs left in the boat, and returned to the bark. The moment Davidson saw what had happened, he got into a perfect passion of virtuous indignation, exclaiming, as he stamped on the deck furiously:

“Discharge every one of that crew, sir! Discharge every one of them, sir! Stupid rascals, to smother two of your finest animals! How could you have picked up such a crew, Mr. Ryan? See what a loss it has caused you.” Then, drawing close to Ryan, he continued, in an undertone: “Mr. Ryan, what are we coming to? If these men had received a proper religious education, this never would have happened.”

Ryan at once gave up all hope of Davidson's sharing any loss in the matter; so, heaving a sigh, he ordered the boatman to dump his two big beauties into the bay. Poor Ryan was Davidson's victim in another particular. The day he purchased the hogs from Davidson, they were counted out for him and paid for. There were just one hundred and seventy-five in all, but soon afterwards a sow gave birth to seven pigs. Five of them were remarkably fine little fellows, while the two others were the veriest little runts that ever disgusted a farmer. Now, the question was, Who did these pigs belong to? After a short, earnest discussion on this interesting point with his boy John, Captain Davidson came to the conclusion that the pigs belonged to himself.

“Yes, John,” he concluded, “as you so intelligently remark, the pigs undoubtedly belong to me, for Mr. Ryan only had counted out to him one hundred and seventy-five head, and can, therefore, have no right to more than that number; yes, that is clear; but, John, we will not be ungenerous in

this matter, we will leave him those two small ones, for I always prefer to lean against myself when there is any sort of doubt, and that should be the rule of life with every honest man, John; don't forget that, my boy.”

185

The morning the delivery was to be made Davidson ordered John to stow away the five fat little pigs below decks; not to hide them from Ryan, he told John, but to prevent them being hurt in the rush of catching the large hogs. Ryan was surprised and mortified to find that one of his finest looking sows had such a miserable product, but Davidson consoled him by suggesting that it might be owing to the fact that the sow was not much of a sailor, and had been too long fed on yams.

With the last load of hogs Davidson went on shore, but before leaving the bark he whispered to John to bring the little pigs up and let them loose on deck. John did so, and the consequence was, every one of them fell down the hatchway, and they all lay dead on the lower deck when Davidson returned. As he looked down the hatchway he seemed very sad and thoughtful; then, calling John, he said, in a solemn warning tone of voice: “Boy, look down there. Let the fate of these pigs be a warning to you through all your future life, never to covet your neighbor's property. I now see that in justice these pigs belong to poor Ryan. Yes, John; the truth is, providentially, made plain to me when it is too late. Throw them overboard, boy. Throw them over, John, and say no more about it.”

To get rid of the oranges was now Davidson's great trouble. It so happened that six or seven other cargoes of oranges had arrived in port the same day with the bark America, so that there was a perfect glut of oranges in the market. Conspicuous among these I recollect one that was owned by Colonel Gift and his son. Their vessel lay at “Long Wharf,” at the foot of Commercial street. The Colonel's son had gone to sea with their craft, intent on another sort of return cargo altogether, but, like Davidson, he was tempted to bring oranges. This mistake of the son was condemned by the father in that characteristic emphatic language that has made the Colonel so notorious in California. You could hear his voice a quarter of a mile off in comments on his son's unwise selection of a cargo, and as you drew near you found him walking excitedly up and down the wharf, using

language original, and so peculiarly profane, that it attracted a large crowd of boys, who followed him with shouts of laughing applause.

The fruit dealers, in the face of this glut in the market, declined to purchase any amount of oranges. In this dilemma a young lawyer, just arrived from New York, whose talents and 186 ability in his profession have since made him one of our wealthiest citizens, came to the rescue, at Mr. West's solicitation. He got the leading fruit men into council, and persuaded them that "a corner" could be made on oranges. The thing looked possible, so a committee was appointed to ascertain how many thousand oranges were sold daily in San Francisco, and at the same time to find out the amount of oranges in the hands of the importers. When this committee called on the bark America, and asked Davidson how many oranges he had sold within the last twenty-four hours, instead of answering them directly he turned to his boy John, and said: "John, we have sold ten thousand, more or less," was John's prompt answer. So the bark America was reported to have sold ten thousand oranges that day, when the fact was, she had not sold more than ten dozen, for almost as many bits, to boys visiting the bark. It is to be presumed that the committee got about as accurate information from all the other ships. The result was, that the fruit men combined, and offered all the ships nineteen dollars per thousand for their oranges, which was gladly accepted. The oranges had all to be picked over before delivering them, and this had to be done, per contract, within two weeks. All the ships but the bark America offered two dollars a day for hands to pick over the oranges. Davidson hunted up little boys, whom he hired "to pick oranges" at fifteen dollars per month.

The boys thought it only fun, but they were soon undeceived, for each two of the oranges were wrapped in leaves with sharp, thorny edges, and the consequence was, that the boys always gave up the job after two or three days' work, with their hands all sore and bleeding. If a boy had put in three days' work, Davidson insisted that it was only two days' work. If they worked four days he only called it three, and so on. When the boys demurred to this, he would demonstrate to them that he was right in this way of counting their time: "Now, boy, listen to me. You came on Monday and worked until Tuesday; that was one day. Then you worked until Wednesday, which is one day more, making two days in all, you see; which is just one-fifteenth of a month. So here is your nice, silver dollar. You are a good boy, and I hope you always go to Sunday school, for there is nothing

like it, my boy; and be sure to always say your 187 prayers before you go to bed. There, boy, go now. There is no use in your waiting for supper; it won't be ready for a long time. Good evening, boy, and recollect what I told you about your prayers.” Some evenings every boy he had would throw up the job. Mr. West would then remonstrate with him, and tell him he would fail in having the oranges ready at the contract time fixed, but Davidson always succeeded in engaging another gang of boys at the same low wages, and the oranges were all picked over and ready for delivery on the day agreed upon; and the work of overhauling them did not cost one-fourth as much as it cost any of the other ships. Davidson's next trouble was to get rid of the bark herself. At that time there was a man in San Francisco from Boston, of the name of Rickets, who made it his business to buy up old ships and put them to some use or other. He sometimes had several of this sort of ships on hand, and used to anchor them in the bay near each other, and the people called them “Rickets' rickety row.” One day Davidson came to Mr. West's store in joyful excitement. As he entered, he exclaimed:

“Well, sir; I thank Providence, I have sold the America to that terrible man, Rickets!”

“Yes?” answered Mr. West. “How much did you get?”

“Just what I asked him, three thousand dollars. Oh, sir, that Rickets is a terrible man; an unsafe man, sir, in this community.”

“How is that, Captain?”

“Well, sir, when I tell you his way of proceeding, you will understand. This morning he came on board our ship, just as John and I had finished our morning's three hours' pumping.”

“Pumping what?” interrupted Mr. West. “You don't mean to say, Captain, that the America leaks while lying at the wharf?”

“Well, sir, now that she is sold I just as leave tell you that John and I had every morning to get up two hours before day, and put in three hours of hard work in pumping, and to do the same every

evening, or I believe she would have gone down right at the wharf. Well, as I was saying, Rickets came on board, and, in his fussy way, exclaimed: 'Well, Captain, this is a fine looking bark you have here, but West tells me she leaks some at sea. Does she leak here at the wharf, Captain? How often have you pumped her since she has been clear of her 188 cargo?' Of course I could not tell a lie, for if there is any thing on earth I despise it is a liar, so I turned to John, who, poor fellow, was lying on a coil of rope to get a little rest after his hard pumping job, and said: 'John, how often have we pumped the America since we got into port? Three or four times, more or less, have we not?' John is a smart boy, Mr. West and I have taught him the importance of that saving clause of mine, more or less, and how it enables a man to speak the truth and at the same time to keep his private business from exposure. Yes, sir, that saving clause I often find of great use to me. It was taught me by a very religious, good man, who had the same detestation of lies I have, and it has enabled me to turn many a sharp corner through life when dealing with unobserving people, and yet preserve my character for truth, which I value, sir, above all worldly goods. So John answered promptly: 'Aye, aye, sir; three or four times, more or less.' So, without further question, Rickets seized a marline spike, and dashing down into the hold, he commenced jamming it into the bottom planks of the bark. At length he struck a plank where it went about through. Turning to me he said: 'There, Captain, that plank is about gone.' I had not the heart to answer him, aspos I supposed all hope of a sale was over, and what was my surprise when he ran on: 'Now, Captain Davidson, get two or three old looking planks and spike them on over this rotten place with old rusty spikes; then scatter some dunnage over them in a careless sort of a way, and I will go and bring two Chinese merchants who want to buy a ship to send a lot of their countrymen home in, and if the 'America' suits them I will take her off of your hands at your figures.' I was horrified at this want of principle in a man so lately from Boston, where the people are all said to be so religious, but it was not my business to criticise his conduct, so I just went and did as he told me, and when he came back with the Chinese merchants they never observed the work I had done to hide the rotten planks, so well had that unconscientious man planned it out. The Chinese merchants agreed to take the bark at four thousand dollars from Rickets, and, on the spot, paid him one hundred dollars to bind the bargain. I then went with him to his office, where he gave me a check for fifteen hundred dollars, on

account of the sale to him of the bark, and the other half of the purchase money is to be paid before I transfer the title in the Custom House.”

189

“But, Captain Davidson, won't you feel badly if the America happens to go down, you know, with two or three hundred Chinamen on board?”

“Oh, I had nothing to do with the sale to the Chinamen; I sold to Rickets, and after he pays me the other fifteen hundred dollars I intend to be very plain with him, and let him know what I think of his conduct in deceiving those poor Chinamen, and risking the lives of so many human beings in such a vessel as the America. I will tell him plainly that it is my opinion that if she undertakes a voyage to China, she will never reach there. This will leave the responsibility entirely on the shoulders of this Boston man. Have you a Bible, Mr. West, you are not using?”

“What do you want of a Bible, Captain?”

“Oh, I thought if you had one to spare, for I cannot spare mine, I would present it to this Mr. Rickets, after he pays me the money, in hopes that it might arouse conscientious scruples, and prevent him from deliberately drowning a cargo of Chinamen, which is what he will do if he ever sends them to sea in that bark.”

This bark's after history was curious. Some one put the Chinamen on their guard, and they forfeited their \$100 and left her on Rickets' hands. He painted her up handsomely, but no one proposed to purchase her for a long time. At this time there was a firm in the city under the name of Osborne & Son. They were enterprising, nice men, and reported financially well off. One day a stranger loitered into their store on some pretence, and soon got into conversation with the senior member of the firm. The stranger was smart and intelligent, and won the confidence of the old man. He said he lived in Sacramento, but was just then on his way back from a trip down the coast. He said he had visited a place in Mexico where turkeys and poultry of all descriptions, then immensely high in San Francisco, could be purchased for almost nothing. He said he had three thousand dollars, and wanted to find a man with a like sum to join him in purchasing a ship and going for a cargo

of poultry to this Mexican town. Osborne at once offered to join him, and in half an hour more they were on the lookout for a suitable vessel. Of course they fell in with the bark America. She was just the thing, so the Sacramento man declared; but on calling on her owner, Rickets, he at first positively refused to part with her, as 190 he had a voyage in view for her himself. Just as Osborne and his friend were leaving the office, Rickets called them back, and said that he just remembered that to-morrow would be steamer day, and that he would be somewhat short of money, so that if they were ready to pay down the price of the bark, five thousand dollars, that afternoon, he would part with her, though regretting to be obliged to do so. Then the Sacramento man said that was impossible, as his money was in Sacramento, and that it would take him three days to get it. Then Osborne asked Rickets if half the money would not do for to-morrow, and that if so he would pay his half that afternoon and give time for his friend to go to Sacramento for his share of the purchase money. After some apparent hesitation and reluctance, on the part of Rickets, it was so arranged. Osborne paid his half that afternoon, as agreed on, and then went with his friend to the Sacramento boat, where he took an affectionate farewell of him, and, of course, poor Osborne never saw that stranger again. The firm of Osborne & Son, now giving up the turkey business as a bad sell, advertised the bark America as being all fitted up as a passenger ship for China. They soon got two or three hundred Chinese passengers, and the bark, looking splendidly under her new paint, put to sea. After being out some three or four days she sprang such a terrible leak that the Chinamen rose in mutiny, and compelled the captain to return to port. The consequence was, lawsuits against Osborne & Son to enforce the return of the passage money. These suits were all decided against the firm, and in the end they parted with the bark America at some very low price to a South American merchant, who changed her name and put her under the Peruvian flag.

Though it is contrary to our marine laws, as I understand them, to permit a ship that once leaves the protection of our flag to return to it again, yet it is certain that this famous bark America was, by some legerdemain, brought back under the United States flag; but what has become of her since I know not. If my recollection serves me right, Mr. Osborne himself told me that his connection with the bark America caused him a loss of ten thousand dollars.

But now, perhaps, you want to know how Ryan's hog speculation resulted. Well, he gave the hogs on shares to a man residing in the sand hills. This man agreed to feed them and properly take care of them for half the increase. The fact is, 191 that this contract between Ryan and this man is said to have been the most minutely and well guarded contract ever drawn in California in those days. Every possible contingency was thought of and provided for. What, then, was the astonishment of Ryan when, after about a month, the hog farmer called at his office one morning, and told him he was out of feed for the hogs, and had no money to obtain any, and urged upon Ryan the necessity of his advancing him a few hundred dollars to prevent the hogs from starving.

“I will do nothing of the kind, sir,” was the indignant reply.

“Then the hogs will all die; for I tell you I have not got a thing for them to eat, nor money to buy it.”

Ryan drew himself up to his full military height, as he answered:

“The contract provided for all that sir.”

“Oh, it does, does it? And the hogs, I suppose, are to live on the contract?”

“Yes, sir; that contract was drawn by no pettifogger; it protects the hogs and guarantees them food, and effectually secures me success in my enterprise. Good morning, sir; read your contract carefully over, and you will see, sir, how plain it is in every particular.”

In two or three weeks after this interview some one told Ryan that most of his hogs were dead, and that the hog farmer had gone to the mines. Not at all put out, Ryan commenced an action at law against the farmer.

His complaint is said to have been a curiosity in the law practice of those days, not only for its length but for the variety of its contents, and the ingenious way the same thing was repeated over and over in different ways. No defendant appeared, so Ryan, to be fair about it, and not to

he balked in his desire to display the contract in Court, got some one to put in an answer. He then demanded a jury trial. To the jury he made a most eloquent appeal as to his rights under the contract, and was really pathetic when alluding to the fate of the hogs after their desertion by the farmer.

The result was a verdict for the full amount of damage claimed in the complaint. An execution was duly issued, but the Sheriff's return was, in effect, that no property was to be found, except a few hogskins and a broken down brush fence. Ryan paid the costs with cheerfulness, and retired from the hog business for good and all.

192

Now you will ask how the "corner on oranges" came out. Well, it cleaned out three of the enterprising firms who had planned it, with the aid of the young lawyer, and all who touched it got more or less hurt. Every orange of Davidson's cargo was dumped into the bay, as were thousands and thousands more with them.

After this, Davidson, having bought an interest in a rancho near Watsonville, went to that locality to live. From there he was often summoned to the county seat (Santa Cruz) for jury service. On those occasions he used to trap a ground squirrel, skin and roast it, put it in his pocket with a cold boiled potato, and walk off to Santa Cruz. He would satisfy himself for breakfast and lunch off of this private store; then in the evening he would take one meal at a hotel kept by Judge Rice, who was County Judge of Santa Cruz county at that time. The Judge was a large, fat man, of good hard common sense. His education had been slightly neglected in his youth, which often caused much amusement to the wags of that county bar, in which the Judge himself frequently joined with the utmost good humor.

It was the Judge's practice, as soon as the Court adjourned, to walk home, take off his coat, and wait on the table of his hotel at meals. This, too, was a source of fun and amusement to his guests, who made it a point to keep the fat Judge on the constant run in waiting on them. It was all the time "Judge, more pork and beans." "Judge, this end of the table is out of spuds" (potatoes). "Judge, is

there no more ham and eggs? No? What are your hens about?” “Judge, did this butter come around Cape Horn?” All this the Judge took in perfect good part, replying with genuine rough wit that kept the whole company laughing.

His position as waiter gave the Judge an insight into Davidson's way of living, and he did not relish it by any means, for he observed that Davidson stowed away the full three meals at one time, and yet the Judge got pay for but one.

On one of these visits of Davidson's to Santa Cruz, the Judge stood this sort of thing patiently for three days; but on the third evening, when he was satisfied that Davidson had his full three meals stowed away, he was surprised by a loud call from his guest for another plate of ham and eggs.

“Ah,” muttered the Judge to himself, “by gosh, old Davidson is making a starter to put in one meal in advance for to-morrow.

193

I suppose his darned squirrel grub has given out; but, by gosh, that is a little too much of a good thing. No, no; I will not put up with that, if this Court knows herself, and she thinks she do; I cannot stand it; no, I will just have a talk with the old chap.”

The result was a free conference with Captain Davidson after supper, which ended in the understanding that the Judge was to make no charge for the time Davidson had eaten at the hotel, provided he would change to Jimmy Skien's hotel, on the opposite side of the street, for the remaining days he was to be in attendance on the jury. It was said that this maneuver of Judge Rice was afterwards discovered by Jimmy Skien, and was the cause of a very serious misunderstanding between these two old friends.

Poor Davidson! When the war of the rebellion broke out, he fled to England to avoid taxes. He returned after peace was established, and after some years died in St. Louis, leaving some \$80,000, of which he bequeathed a small part to some near relations, and the rest to the “Presbyterian Church

of Ireland,” which is all in litigation to this day. A book of amusing stories of this California miser could be told, but my space compels me to drop him here.

JUDGE WILLIAM BLACKBURN ON THE MOSAIC LAW.

Judge William Blackburn was the first American Alcalde of Santa Cruz. He was an old pioneer, I think, of 1847. He was very tall in person, and very dignified in his aspect. To look at him you could hardly fancy that he ever laughed, yet beneath this appearance of austere dignity lurked the most uncontrollable desire to create merriment and fun. He was sharp, and naturally witty, and had a keen sense of the ridiculous. His opponents always feared him, for in controversy he was sure to give them some cut, when it was least expected, that would put them in the most ridiculous point of view, and, while doing this, not a smile would disturb his own absurd dignity.

In the Summer of '49 a man was arrested for shaving all the hair off the tail of a very fine American horse, which a citizen had brought all the way from Kentucky to Santa Cruz. The culprit had done this to utilize the hair for making a riata. When brought before Alcalde Blackburn he confessed his guilt, 194 so the Judge at once sentenced him to be taken to the Plaza and there publicly shaved until not a hair was left upon his head. A young lawyer who had just arrived, and who thought this a good opportunity to bring himself into notice, volunteered to defend the prisoner, but, in consequence of the confession of guilt, his efforts were fruitless. However, on hearing the extraordinary sentence, he indignantly demanded of the Judge by what law he was authorized to pass so strange a sentence.

“Young man,” said the Judge, with solemnity, “I see you are a newcomer, and I therefore excuse your ignorance, and will answer your question for this once. In this instance I go by the oldest law known to civilization; I go by the Mosaic law, a tooth for a tooth, an eye for an eye, you know, young man; and permit me to advise you to be more careful in the study of your Bible; there is nothing like it, young man.”

The sentence was literally carried out, to the great amusement of an assembled crowd.

On another occasion his courtesy to the newcomers from the State of New York saved a man's life, in this way: A man in Santa Cruz borrowed a horse from an acquaintance to make a trip to Monterey. In that town he was offered a fine price for the horse, which he considered more than its value, so he accepted the money, at the time intending to bring it to the owner of the horse. But that night he was induced to try his luck at cards, and lost every dollar; so, on his return to Santa Cruz, he had neither horse nor money to present to the owner. The owner was enraged, particularly as the horse was a favorite one. He had the defaulter arrested and brought before Alcalde Blackburn, accused of the crime of horse stealing; a jury was then impaneled, and the lawyers on both sides made long, brilliant speeches. The jury retired, and it was not long before they returned with a verdict of "guilty, as charged," and, besides, ordering the man to be hanged forthwith, for, in those days, the Alcalde juries always determined the punishment. On hearing the verdict the Judge quickly asked the foreman by what State laws they had been governed in this instance.

"By the laws of Texas," was the reply.

"Well," said the Judge, "that is all right enough, but you must all, gentlemen, observe that a number of New Yorkers have lately arrived in our State; now, I think, just as a matter of good-will to them, it is time their State laws should have some 195 show here in California; so please take your verdict under advisement again, and here is a volume of New York criminal law for you to look over, and try the prisoner in accordance with the laws you there find laid down, and see what the result will be."

The jury seemed to think this courtesy to the State of New York a good idea, so they did as the Judge told them, and, after awhile, appeared with the verdict, "guilty of a breach of trust;" punishment—the prisoner to lie in jail until he should pay the owner of the horse the money he sold it for, together with all the costs of prosecution.

THE JUDGE EXPOUNDS THE LAW OF MATRIMONY IN CALIFORNIA.

In the Summer of 1849 the Judge took a trip to the mines with some friends. Then there was no steamer on the Sacramento, so the party proceeded up the river in the usual way at that time, by schooner. When night came they generally dropped anchor in some quiet little turn out of the river, went on shore and built a large fire, in the smoke of which they defended themselves from the terrible swarms of mosquitos that threatened to take their last drop of blood. On one such occasion the Judge's party dropped anchor opposite an embryo little town, consisting of three or four shanties. As the Judge and party entered the town they heard loud voices, as if in angry dispute, in a house near them. On going to ascertain the cause, they found all the inhabitants of the town, consisting, perhaps, of a dozen men and one woman, in great excitement. This house, it appeared, was the residence of the local Alcalde of the district. One of the men present, a tall, well-built Missourian, had come, with this only lady of the neighborhood, and demanded of the Alcalde that he should forthwith unite them in the bonds of wedlock. This the Alcalde declined to do, which was the cause of the row. Judge Blackburn now drew himself up to his full height, and, in his usual dignified way, asked the Alcalde the reason of his extraordinary conduct in refusing so reasonable a demand.

“Because,” said the Alcalde, “this lady has a husband living.”

“Yes,” said the Missourian; “she had a husband, but he abandoned her, and has not been heard of for such a long time 196 that he must be dead. Anyway, I am willing to take the chances, and it is none of the Alcalde's business my doing so.”

The Santa Cruz Judge now bent his eyes keenly on the lady, and then turning to the Missourian, said:

“How long, sir, is it since this lady's husband left her?”

“It is nearly three months, and when he left he told her he would be back in a month; so, you see, he is dead to a certainty.”

“Three months!” repeated the Judge, in a tone of astonishment, while his eyes were bent on the Alcalde. “Did you hear, sir? Three months!” repeated the Judge.

“I have heard,” said the Alcalde, “but I will have nothing to do with this business.”

“Any man,” said Judge Blackburn, “in California who has a wife, and so fine a looking wife as I see here before me, and who remains absent from her for three months, must be insane, Mr. Alcalde, or dead; and in either case the lady is free to marry again. I am Alcalde of Santa Cruz, and will with great pleasure, perform the required ceremony to make you two man and wife. Step forward, madam, step forward, and don't be bashful; have confidence, madam; I feel sure you will get through this trying occasion without fainting, if you make the effort and do not give way to your natural shyness. Step forward, my dear sir, by the side of your blushing bride, and I will make you a happy man.”

The ceremony over, the Judge turned to the obstinate Alcalde and said, with a patronizing sort of an air:

“You are a newcomer, my dear sir, in California, and are are, therefore, excusable for the extraordinary position you took on this occasion. When you are longer among us you will understand ‘our ways,’ and make no such grave mistakes as you did this evening, which came very near destroying the happiness of two innocent, loving hearts.”

Then came a man with a fiddle, and all was soon uproarious fun until a late hour that night, in which the Santa Cruz Alcalde appeared perfectly at home, and the happiest of the happy.

After the organization of the State under the first Constitution, a lawyer of the name of Pur Lee was appointed County Judge of Santa Cruz County, and a man of the name of Peter Tracy was elected County Clerk. The Judge was an American and the Clerk was Irish by birth. When sober, they were both refined gentlemen in appearance and manners; but, unfortunately, they were equally opposed to long spells of sobriety, which was often the cause of the most ridiculous scenes in the Judge's Court. Soon after Pur Lee went on the bench in Santa Cruz, there came to the county, to try

his luck in the practice of the law, a Mr. S., a finely educated young lawyer, who is now well known among us as one of our most wealthy citizens. He was of fine appearance and pleasing manners, so he was not long left briefless. The very first case given in his charge was an important one, and involved a considerable amount. It was to be tried before Judge Pur Lee. S. prepared it with great care, and as it was a jury case, he thought over the speech he was to make on the occasion. In fact, he rehearsed it in a lonesome spot on the seashore, like the orator of old, where, amid the sullen thunder of the dashing wild waves of the Pacific, he gave his voice full vent. The trial day came; the case was an interesting one, and the courtroom was well filled with spectators. The evidence was all taken, and looked favorable to our friend S.'s side.

He arose to sum up; and, after reviewing the testimony, dashed right into his seaside speech. All now appeared to be in wild excitement in the courtroom, to his imagination. His memory did not fail him, and he had just entered on the Fourth of July part of his speech, which he considered most beautiful, and was away up among the stars in the azure firmament, when, to his consternation, the Judge interrupted him with:

“Mr. S., I have an authority here which I would like to consult before we proceed further, as to that last statement you made to the jury.”

S. is almost thrown into despair at this unexpected blow from his honor, the Judge; but, wiping the perspiration from his forehead, he stammered out:

“Well, your honor, what is the authority you wish to look at?”

The Judge quietly looks down from his bench upon Tracy, the Clerk, who was seated at his desk, before him, saying in the coolest way:

“Peter, hand out that authority.”

Peter, equally unmoved, without answering, draws from under his desk a well filled demijohn, three or four glasses and a pitcher of water, placing them all on the bench before the Judge. The Judge then, while deliberately helping himself to a well filled glass, says:

198

“Come, Mr. S., I know you must be dry, and you have overexcited that jury, so they had better come too. And Mr. Crane, your opponent, had better come also; for I see plainly that he has lost this case and needs a little consolation.”

In astonishment, up walks S., in company with the jury, officials, lawyers and all, to enjoy the refreshment of the demijohn.

After a second round of drinks the Judge exclaimed, addressing the jury:

“I believe, boys, you are going to give this case to S.”

To this the jury all assented; so the Judge, turning to George Crane, continued:

“That being the case, George, there is no use in pressing the matter further; it would only be a loss of time, and, besides, I see it is dinner hour.”

Then, turning to S., he said:

“You can just reserve the rest of that speech for your next case; I see you have it well committed, and are not likely to forget it. It will do for almost any occasion, you know, and I thought it a pity to let you throw it away on a case already won.”

This created merriment at S's expense, which he quieted by taking Frank Alzina's hint. Frank was the Sheriff, and in social tastes was something of the same sort with the Judge and the Clerk. The hint he gave to S. was that as soon as they reached the hotel for dinner, “a basket of champagne would be in order.”

S's friends in Santa Cruz county, when telling this story, always add that S. did in fact utilize that broken-off speech afterwards, on the occasion of his being elected Speaker of the California House of Assembly, two years later.

Be this as it may, it is certain that to this day the usual way of asking a friend to drink in Santa Cruz is, "let us consult an authority."

L. S., now a wealthy merchant of Santa Cruz, told me, among many good anecdotes of early times, one which will serve to explain what sort of ministers of religion the authors of the "Annals of San Francisco" saw in gambling dens, as they represented they did, '49, '50 and '51.

Mr. L. S., the merchant I allude to, said:

"I was brought up as a machinist in my native State of Maine, and worked at it while there, and in the city of Boston. 199 On the breaking out of the California excitement, I came to the State, and stopped first in the southern mines, where I worked in the placer diggings, with indifferent success. Finding that sixteen dollars was paid freely for shoeing a horse, I thought I would try my hand at that business, though I never had shod a horse in my life. I sent to Stockton for a blacksmith's outfit, and, on its arrival, opened my shop, and did first rate in the way of making money. About this time the first preacher that ever was seen in that part of the State made his appearance. He commenced to preach and hold prayer meetings at the different mining camps within a range of ten or fifteen miles. At first his meetings were well attended. Some went for a good motive, some for a bad motive, and many without any particular motive. I went, too, at first, but I never fancied the man, and, after awhile, rather avoided him altogether. There was a canting, hypocritical way about him that made me suspect his sincerity. He came to my shop, however, and had his horse shod all round. When I had finished the shoeing I stood looking at the minister as though I expected the "ounce" I had just earned, but instead of handing me the dust, he said:

"I suppose, young man, you are willing to charge this job as done for the Lord."

“Not much,” said I. “When I want to send money to the Lord I will choose my own messenger.”

He then begged off for the present, promising to pay when he got in funds; so I agreed to trust. He soon afterwards, I found, traded off the horse I had shod for one without shoes. The new horse he brought to me to shoe, and again begged off for want of funds. This, I found, was a sort of a game of his, for it occurred the third time. The last time he assured me that after the next Sabbath meeting he would pay me out of his collections of that day. So, for the third time, I trusted him. Monday morning came, but no Mr. Preacher to pay his bill. On mentioning the matter to one of my customers, he told me that Mr. Preacher had preached his farewell sermon, and had taken up quite a large collection, and was to start for the Northern mines that day. The road by which I knew he must leave our neighborhood was not far from my shop; so I started for it, and taking my seat on a large rock I waited for his appearance. I was not long there when the preacher came, leading a pack-mule with all his traps.

200

I had a revolver in my belt, as was the universal custom at that time, but I did not take it in my hand, or make any motion to do so. I saluted the preacher politely, saying I had come for my bill, as I had heard that he was leaving “the diggings.”

He began to make excuses, and, with a whine, to talk of the Lord.

“Come, come,” said I; “you will find I mean business, this time. So out with the \$48 you owe me; and to be candid with you, preacher, I will tell you plainly that I consider you nothing more nor less than a hypocritical knave.”

“You mean what you say, S., do you?”

“You will find out if you do not hand out my money.”

“Then there is nothing left but to pay you, I suppose.”

“I see no way you can escape,” said I. “So you had better act the part of an honest man and pay your debts.”

He handed out the money, and, as he did so, said with a good humored smile:

“I see, Mr. S., that you will do to travel. Good morning.”

In about four months after this interview with the preacher I got a good opportunity of selling out my business, which I took advantage of, as I wished to visit San Francisco and see what I could do to make money in a more agreeable way.

The second day after my arrival in the city, I was surprised, while sauntering around, to meet my friend, the preacher. He was most cordial in his recognition, and I observed that he had lost all traces of the long-faced, canting exhorter.

“What church do you preach in now?” I asked.

“Preach!” said he, “I have given up all that d—d humbug. It did not pay worth a cent. How much money have you got, S.?”

I was not much disposed to let him into my affairs, but I answered:

“A thousand dollars, or so.”

“Well,” said he, “I have a thousand, or so, more; and that will be plenty to let us open a monte bank. It will pay like smoke.”

I pretended to acquiesce, and drew him out on the whole plan of operations, which I found out was a well concocted plan of villainous swindling, from beginning to end. I excused myself, just then, on the plea of an engagement for that hour, but agreed to meet him in front of the Parker House at the same hour next day.

The next day I took a look from the upper side of the Plaza, and there I saw my ex-preacher walking backwards and forwards in front of the Parker House, evidently waiting for the interview with me, and there I left him; and that day I started for Santa Cruz county, where I have lived ever since.

EUGENE OF GREENHORN, OR THE IMPARTIAL JURY.

On Greenhorn Mountain, in my county (Kern), years ago, there lived a little Frenchman, known to every one as “Eugene,” and I think he lives there to this day. He was a miner and a merchant both. He kept a store, well supplied with miners' goods, and in the rainy season worked himself in the placer claims that were, in places, often very rich on Greenhorn. On one occasion he had collected twenty-nine hundred dollars' worth of dust, and, thinking himself unobserved, he deposited it in the bottom of an old abandoned shaft, which was a favorite hiding place of his for spare cash.

This time, however, two travelers, who lay in the shade of some scrub oaks near by, saw him descend into the old shaft. He was no sooner out of sight, after coming out, than they were in the shaft to prospect. They found the treasure, and made off with it. It so happened that Eugene returned to the shaft again that very day, to make another deposit, and discovered his loss. He at once made for the Constable of the district, “Scotty George.” He told Scotty that if he recovered the dust he would give him half of it as a reward. This was a good offer, so Scotty went to work, and soon got traces of the traveling thieves. He took a couple of determined men with him, and overhauled the robbers at White River, at the foot of the mountain, and captured the sack of dust, yet unopened. But he found there three men, apparently concerned together in the robbery. So Scotty marched all the men back to Greenhorn.

At this time, there was a man of the name of John Hudnut acting as Justice of the Peace in that district. Before him Scotty took his three prisoners. Hudnut at once impaneled a jury to try them for robbery, assuming to himself the power of Grand Jury, County Court, and all. When the jury was sworn in, two smart fellows were got to act as lawyers—one for each side. I recollect that one of them was a man of the name of Ferguson, 202 who was then running what the miners call a “one-mule” mine, which was very rich, though small, as its designation indicates, and which he named

“Nellie Dent,” in remembrance, as he said, of his old sweetheart, who was a sister of Mrs. General Grant. Be this as it may, Fergeson defended the prisoners with success. One of the prisoners proved, to the satisfaction of the jury, that he never in his life was on Greenhorn Mountain until brought there by Scotty George that day; so that let him out. The other two men acknowledged the fact of having taken the gold from the shaft, but set up the defence that they supposed it lost treasure, and that their right to it as finders was perfect.

The jury, after hearing an eloquent speech from each of the lawyers, and a pointed charge from the Judge, gave their verdict, or decision. It was to this effect: Scotty George was first to take half of the recovered gold, in accordance with his contract made with Eugene, and then the remaining twelve hundred and fifty dollars was to be equally divided between Eugene, the Justice, the two thieves, the members of the jury, and the two lawyers—share and share alike.

On hearing this verdict, Eugene began to dance around, wiping the tears from his eyes, while he swore every French oath he had ever heard in his native country, supposed to give relief on such an occasion as this.

There was one other man also dissatisfied; the man wrongfully arrested. He made a great outcry about being left out in the cold, as he said, as they had not awarded him a dollar.

Justice Hudnut, with apparent astonishment, remonstrated with this unreasonable man. He said:

“Young man, what are you blowing about? Did you not prove to the full satisfaction of the jury that you were entirely innocent of any part in this nefarious transaction I have just been taking cognizance of? How could you, then, expect that the jury would give you a share of the gold dust?”

The outsider now saw his mistake, and that he should have pleaded guilty; but it was too late. Scotty George thought his friend Eugene *did* come out of the business rather badly, so he gave him four hundred dollars out of his own share, and he also gave fifty dollars to the innocent man. So all were now happy except poor Eugene, who never ceased to mourn his loss. This celebrated case is often told over in Visalia, where all the parties were well known, and is, in all respects, literally

true. The 203 renowned justice, John Hudnut, in later years, left the State for his old home in New Jersey; but his brother Joe, who first reported the facts of the case to me, is yet, I believe, wandering on Greenhorn or Chelsey mountains, near Havilah, in search of his fortune.

DAN MURPHY DISPERSES HIS SQUATTERS.

Mr. Daniel Murphy owned a large and valuable tract of land in the southern part of Santa Clara county. In old squatter times this splendid property did not escape from the wild squatting fever that ran through the whole country, while the titles to Spanish grants were yet unconfirmed by our government. Dan took no notice of his squatters, never even ordering them away. This was a different sort of policy from that pursued by most of the other land-holders, and the squatters hardly knew what to make of it. At length they grew very uneasy, and finally concluded to consult a lawyer, of the name of Green, who was a sort of a public nuisance at that time, pretending to great learning in all the laws that related to Spanish grants. This fellow secured a good round fee from the squatters, and undertook the investigation of Murphy's title to his ranch. In due time a meeting was called, to hear Green's report, at a large house built by a squatter, about where the "Eighteen-Mile House" was afterwards built, on the San José road. Just as the meeting was called to order, with Doctor Lively in the chair, some one spied Murphy himself riding leisurely along the road toward San José. A proposition was made to call him in, that he might hear Green's report and defend his title, if he could do so. Without hesitation, Dan accepted the invitation. Green read his report, and explained it all first rate. It completely demolished Murphy's title to the ranch, and even hinted that Murphy was a trespasser in removing or taking away any of the cattle. The cattle, it was said, belonged to the ranch, and the ranch belonged, beyond all doubt, to the settlers who had staked out their claims on it.

As soon as Green took his seat, the chairman of the meeting requested Mr. Murphy to say what he wished in defence. But Mr. Murphy, in the most condescending and polite way, requested other gentlemen to give their views. So, one after another, all the smart talkers relieved themselves of their thoughts, 204 and, of course, were fully convinced that Mr. Green's views were entirely right, and that they not only had found "Congress land," but "Congress cattle" as well. To each talker

Dan listened with the utmost attention, always when a speaker took his seat calling for another gentleman to give his sentiments. In this way he succeeded in keeping some squatter talking until night was closing in. When all had spoken there was a general call for Murphy. He then arose and said:

“Boys, I have not a word to say, but that I have seldom or ever spent so pleasant an afternoon as I have to-day, listening to so many fine talkers, and I think the least I can do on this occasion is to treat the crowd. In fact, I think it is my treat, so I invite all hands to come into Doc. Lively's saloon, where we will have a good, old-time hot-whisky punch, for it is now late and getting cold.”

The squatters were surprised and evidently put out at this way of taking Green's attack on his title, but in the prospect of a free drink they soon lost sight of everything else. So they accepted the invitation and drank freely, and parted with Murphy in the best of humor. As Dan threw himself into his saddle, he said:

“Above all things, boys, take care of that enterprising young lawyer, Mr. Green; he is certainly a starter for a Chief Justice, or something of that sort.”

In a moment more Dan was out of sight, and the only dark, dissatisfied man he left behind him was the embryo Chief Justice, Green.

In one month after this meeting Murphy had not a squatter on his ranch.

In Tulare county, a little north of where I then resided, some years ago, there was a grand old-time rodeo. Ten thousand cattle were said to be on the ground. All the great cattle kings of Southern California were there; Lux & Miller, Dan Murphy, Fowler, Dunphy & Hildreth, o'Connor and many others. Of course there were vaqueros without number, marking, branding and selecting out fat cattle for the market. Soon there arose a great row among the vaqueros. Then came the news that one of Murphy's vaqueros had drawn his six-shooter, and had dangerously wounded some other vaquero. The wounded man went to the nearest Justice of the Peace, and had a warrant issued for the arrest of the belligerent vaquero. There was no lawyer at hand, so Dan Murphy volunteered

to defend the prisoner himself. All the kings of the cattle at once assembled, evidently anticipating some fun in the scene of Murphy's acting the lawyer.

The District Attorney happened to be near at hand, and therefore appeared for the prosecution. To the astonishment of that worthy official, after he had done up his side of the case, the first witness called by the defendant's attorney was an Irishman just arrived from Ireland, who candidly declared himself entirely ignorant of the whole matter, not even having been on the rodeo ground when the fray occurred.

“That makes no difference, my friend,” said Dan, “You know, undoubtedly, just what I want to show to this honorable Court. I want you to describe to this honorable Court, to the best of your knowledge and belief, what a shillalah is, and for what purpose it is mostly used in Ireland.”

The District Attorney here objected, and said that this had nothing whatever to do with the case. The Justice said that he thought it better to let Mr. Murphy develop his theory of the defence of the prisoner in his own way, as the Court wanted “justice, yes, vigorous justice, dealt out on this occasion,” and he wanted all the light possible thrown on the case. “There was often,” he continued, “great dissatisfaction found with the practice of the higher Courts, in excluding all testimony that could not be understood as bearing on the case before them.” This was a grave error, that should never be made in his Court, he hoped.

Then, with his eyes fixed on the District Attorney, with a reproving expression, he concluded, “The objection is overruled; Mr. Murphy will proceed.”

Dan now showed, by this son of the Emerald Isle, what a shillalah was, and that it was used by powerful men at fairs and other public assemblies in Ireland, as a conservator of the peace.

“Then, my friend, from your knowledge of the shillalah, you consider it a peace-maker.”

“Why then, indeed, Mr. Murphy, it makes peace very often, as well as sometimes pieces of a fellow's head.”

“Yes, yes,” interrupted Dan. “Then you consider a shillalah a peace-maker?”

“Faith, it is sir; when it is a smart boy that handles it.”

“Yes, that is just what I wanted to prove, your Honor, by this witness; that in Ireland a shillalah is viewed by everyone as 206 a peace-maker. District Attorney, you can take the witness.”

“He can go to the Devil; I have nothing to ask him.”

The Justice at once arose to his feet, and, looking at the District Attorney, said in a voice of injured dignity: “Mr. District Attorney, I allow no indecorous language in this Court, sir, and if you indulge again in such expressions during the examination of this important case, I will have to vindicate the dignity of this Court, and fine you, sir.”

Then, as he wiped his face with his handkerchief to allay his excited feelings, he took his seat, and continued: “Proceed, Mr. Murphy.”

Dan then called an old resident of Tulare county, and after he was sworn addressed him thus:

“Mr. Hawkins, you have heard all our friend from Ireland has so clearly testified to, as to the shillalah. Please state to the Court if you know of any weapon used in this county in a similar way, and if so, Mr. Hawkins, say what that weapon is.”

“Well, I do; and it is a six-shooter, or revolver, as it is usually called.”

“Just so. Now, Mr. Hawkins, please say to this Honorable Court if you have ever witnessed cases, with your own eyes, when this Tulare ‘peace-maker’ did in fact make peace?”

“Yes, when in good hands, it often makes peace; as it did today on the rodeo grounds, in the hands of that prisoner.”

“District Attorney, you can take the witness.”

“I don't want him; he can go where I told the Irishman to go.”

The Justice looked very hard at the prosecuting officer, but said nothing, seeming to think his language just within bounds.

Dan then announced that he rested his case.

The Justice asked the District Attorney if he would sum up his side, but that officer declined, muttering something, in a low voice, about justice and a d—d farce.

“What do you say, sir?” said the Justice, in a voice of loud indignation. “What is it you are pleased to call a d—d farce?”

“What I said was not intended to be heard by the Court.”

“Oh, well, Mr. Attorney, I take your apology; I know you could not so far forget yourself as to apply such language to this Court.”

Then, turning to Murphy, he said:

207

“Please, Mr. Murphy, sum up, and close this case.”

Dan, it is said, fairly outdid himself in witty argument in defense of the prisoner, suitable to the testimony he had introduced. When he closed, the Justice rendered a short oral opinion, closing thus:

“In my whole official career, I must say, I never recollect a case coming before me that was so well and ably handled in the defense as this case to-day; nor can I recollect a case so important in its character; so pregnant of results. My friends, this case will, in the future, be cited by the most eminent jurists in the higher courts of the State, as a precedent not to be disregarded. Mr. Murphy, allow me to congratulate you, sir, on the ability you have to-day displayed. Your research into Irish

authorities was entirely in place, fully as much so as the constant citation of English authorities our bar is so prone to. In your case nothing but an Irish authority would have answered, and, I must say, it was exactly in point, and has enabled the Court to come to a prompt decision in this intricate case. Your name, sir, will live as long as Tulare county has a 'peace-maker' left. The prisoner is discharged from custody, and this Court stands adjourned."

Soon afterwards the District Attorney took this case before the Grand Jury in Visalia, and sought to get the fighting vaquero indicted, and also the Justice of the Peace before whom he was examined, but Dan Murphy was called before the jury, and after hearing his statement they ignored both bills. That evening the jurymen were Dan's guests at an extra good dinner, where, it is said, even the wounded man and the District Attorney gave in, and joined heartily in all the fun of the entertainment.

HOW DAN MURPHY WAS SOLD.

Long ago, I think in the winter of 1852, Dan Murphy sold a band of fat cattle in San José, where he lived at the time. He was paid in gold coin, some fifteen thousand dollars. This he put in his valise, all ready for an early start for San Francisco the next morning.

These were the days of stage coaches, and stage coaches only, as a means of travel in California. So an hour before daylight, and a cold, disagreeable Winter's morning it was, the stage rolled 208 up to Murphy's dwelling-house, and Cole, the famous driver of those days, sang out lustily for his expected passenger. More asleep than awake, Dan appeared at his door with valise in hand; the valise he pushed under one of the seats of the stage, covering it with some straw, that was put in the stage to keep the feet warm, and then he leaped on the driver's box alongside of his friend Cole. In a moment more they whirled back to Beaty's for the hotel passengers.

It so happened that a miner, who had been prospecting for gold in the Southern California mountains, slept at Beaty's that night, and was going in the morning to San Francisco. As he appeared to take his seat in the stage, he held a valise, the exact match of Murphy's, though this Dan did not observe. It was weighty, also, and the owner, who was wrapped in a miner's blanket, seemed

very careful of it. He, too, stowed away this valise under the same seat with Murphy's, and threw himself into a snug corner, to doze and dream of quartz ledges that would yield five hundred dollars to the ton. The roads were terribly bad that day, and Cole did not reach the old stand on the Plaza in San Francisco until an hour after dark. The instant he drew up his horses, Dan leaped from the box, pulled the coach door open and reached in, grasping his valise, as he supposed, and walked off with it. The miner did the same. Dan, on reaching his hotel, handed his valise to the hotel-keeper unopened, intimating its contents. The next morning he shaved up, and, putting himself in a presentable shape, called for his valise, and departed for the bank of Page, Bacon & Co. After shaking hands with the bank people and having a little chat, and the usual lively joke, Dan applied his key to the lock of the valise. It fitted exactly. But, lo! what did Dan find in the valise? Not his gold, but instead of it a quantity of quartz, sparkling with the precious metal, as if to make fun of him! In astonishment he grasps at the remaining contents of the valise, but what again does he find? Four soiled shirts; nothing more! Dan enjoys a joke, but this was a little too much for even him; and it is whispered that the expressions which now escaped his lips would be indecorous if used in the neighborhood of a church, or even in a lady's parlor. What was to be done? The banker suggested an immediate visit to the Chief of Police. Dan took the hint, and leaving valise, quartz, soiled shirts, and all, scattered on the floor of the bank, he dashed off with his hat 209 in his hand, instead of being in its proper place, on his head, through Montgomery street and up Merchant street to the City Hall, and to the Chief's office.

The protector of the lives and property of the people of San Francisco heard his story all through; but instead of showing any sympathy or being properly aroused into indignation, a smile showed itself on his face.

“No joke,” exclaimed Murphy. “Chief, I like a joke as well as any man in California; every one knows that; but this is no joke. Fifteen thousand dollars is a little too much to pay for a joke on one morning, even if it is California! No, it is no joke, and I will not, Mr. Chief, put up with it as a joke.”

The Chief, without answering, took up a copy of the *Alta California*, of that morning, and pointing to an advertisement, said:

“Read that, Mr. Murphy.”

Dan could not see what an advertisement had to do with his loss, but he did as he was told, and read the following advertisement, which was headed—

“ROBBERY MOST VILE.

“If the wretch who stole my valise from the San Jose coach, last evening, which contained valuable specimens of quartz rock, and four dirty shirts, will return the quartz, which can be of no use to him, he can keep the shirts if he needs them; and besides I will give him two dollars to get a good square meal with. I can be found at the wholesale grocery store, No. 105 Sansome street, from ten o'clock to one in the afternoon. The meeting will be strictly private, all on honor, and no questions to be asked.”

Now Dan's whole countenance changed. He shook all over with a low, suppressed laugh, while he exclaimed:

“That fellow has got me, sure. I am in for it—suppers, champagne, theater and all. Yes, as sure as there is a grizzly in California. Yes, the fellow will take advantage of me, and have a crowd there to receive me large enough to fill a whole theater. But there is no help for it; I must face the music, for he has me sure.”

So Dan returned to the bank, gathered up the quartz, shirts and all, put them into the valise, locked it carefully, and, with the look of a martyr, while fun, however, twinkled in his eye, marched off boldly to 105 Sansome street, muttering to himself, as he walked and turned his head from side to side in an uneasy way, “Yes, strictly private; I know what that means. He intends to have half the town there. No questions to be asked; I know what that means. I am not to be allowed to ask any

questions about my money until I have paid d—d well for it. Oh, yes, he has got me. The miner is master of the situation, and I have only to face the music, that is all.”

He was not mistaken. The miner had him, sure enough! A crowd of choice fellows were there to receive him.

Dan, unfortunately, asked a question about his valise. This, it was declared, nullified the promises given in the advertisement. So Dan was arrested forthwith, tried in the back room of the store, by a jury taken from the crowd found in waiting, and of course, found guilty of stealing the quartz and four dirty shirts, and fined the suppers, champagne and theater tickets, just as he had foreseen.

Dan Murphy always declared that it cost him over three hundred dollars to pay that fine, and “put the crowd through all right.” But it is quite certain that no one enjoyed the spending of that money, or the fun of that afternoon, more than did Dan Murphy himself.

ELLEN HARVEY;

OR,

THE WIFE's DISAPPOINTMENT.

CHAPTER I.

ON BOARD OF THE STEAMER.

In a late Summer month of 1850 came steaming through the Golden Gate one of the Pacific Mail Company's fine ships, always so welcome to us Californians, as they brought us news of our old homes, and of friends dearly loved, with whom we had so lately parted. It was one of our finest days, which are not surpassed by those of any land or clime on earth. The sun shone out beautifully, and the bay was smooth and calm. The luxuriant grass and wild flowers that covered the hills to the north in the Spring, were not there; yet, those grand old mountains looked imposing and beautiful in

the distance, while even the broken sand hills, on which stood all of San Francisco that was then in existence, looked cheerful and bright.

It was about ten o'clock in the morning; the steamer deck was crowded with passengers—men, women and children. There were twenty men to one woman or child. To look at, they were a fine body of people; healthy, young and vigorous. As you looked you could not help feeling that they were just the sort for a new State. Easy self-reliance and bold, persevering courage shone out in all their movements, and in every expression of word or look you drew from them; while at the same time, anxious thoughts, hope, pleasure and a sort of sadness too, were plainly discernible. Such expressions as, “How beautiful those hills to the north look in the distance!” “What a magnificent bay!” “So this is San Francisco,” you could hear on every side.

The gentlemanly captain, released of his charge by the pilot, was the only entirely careless and happy looking man in sight. As he answered the eager questions of his passengers, his voice rang out with a cheerful, light, happy tone. There was a kind 214 gentleness in it, too, when he spoke to his lady passengers, with whom he appeared a great favorite. He now walked across the deck to where a gentleman and lady stood, each holding the hand of a sweet little girl of twelve, who was standing on a chair between them, and whose face was beaming with excitement and pleasure, as she gazed with her father and mother on the scene before them. The captain said, as he approached, “Good morning, Mr. and Mrs. Dicks; where is your charge, Mrs. Harvey? Why is she not on deck, to enjoy this first sight of her new home and the pleasant termination of her journey?”

“Oh, yes; where is Mrs. Harvey, sure enough,” said Mrs. Dicks; “why is she not here? Emma, my dear,” she continued, addressing her little daughter, “run and look for Mrs. Harvey, and ask her to join us.” She added in a lower tone, before letting go her little daughter's hand: “Tell her the Captain asked for her.” Off the little girl bounded. Let us follow her. In a moment she is in the cabin; not a soul is there; she runs to one of the staterooms, and, without ceremony, throws the door open. There, seated near a small table, is the lady Emma is looking for, her elbow resting on the table and her head leaning forward on her hand, apparently absorbed in deep thought. She is young, not over twenty-one; she is dressed without show or pretence, but most becomingly, and, for the

occasion, with exquisite taste. No ornament but her watch and chain, a diamond ring that guards the plain gold one on her wedding finger, and the bright diamond cross-pin that fastens collar and dress close to her throat, an emblem of unselfish love and of truth and purity that it is impossible to dim or tarnish; it looks so useful and so in keeping with her own surpassing beauty, that you do not remark it, but feel that you would miss it if it were not there. She is a little over middle height; her hair, of which she has a profusion, is as black as the glossy wing of a raven; her eyes are a dark hazel, full of soul, tenderness and decided character, as such eyes always are; her beautiful and fully developed figure is as faultless in form and outline as the expression of her countenance is dignified, sweet and bewitchingly charming.

“Oh! Mrs. Harvey,” said Emma, “we are almost in the bay; San Francisco is clear in sight, and looks so beautiful! and we are all so happy! and mamma says, come up on deck, and that the Captain asked for you.” Off Emma bounded, without waiting for a reply. Mrs. Harvey arose quickly, and, turning to a good looking and prepossessing girl, who was evidently her waiting maid, and who was then engaged in packing and making all ready to leave the steamer, said:

“Katie, I must go on deck. Where is my warm shawl?”

“Here, ma'am,” said Katie, placing the shawl upon the lady's shoulders. “But why,” continued Katie, “do you look almost sad, my own dear Mrs. Harvey, and say *must* go on deck; I should think you would be the happiest woman on earth at this moment, just going to meet your dear husband, and such a husband as he is! He was counted the handsomest young man in Philadelphia, and the best and truest, too, and he always loved the very ground you walked on; though, surely, he was not to be praised for that, for he could not help himself.”

“Yes, Katie, I should be happy, and am happy, you good, dear girl; I always like to hear you praise my darling husband, and no one can praise him enough; but, oh! Katie,” she continued, taking the girl's hand in hers, while every feature of her beautiful face became intensely expressive, and her sweet voice for a moment sank low and tremulous, yet was clear and deep, “as I near the spot where I am to meet him, a strange foreboding sometimes seizes on me that I can in no way account for or

at once shake off; a foreboding” (here her voice for a moment choked, and leaning forward until her lips touched Katie's ear, as if she herself feared to hear the words she was trying to utter) she continued, “a foreboding that Frank and I are not again to meet.” There was something so earnest in her look and manner that Katie trembled to her very feet, but, recovering herself, she said in a cheerful voice, “My dear, dear Mrs. Harvey, you must not let such bad thoughts haunt you; you will see that it is the Evil One who is tormenting you, and that you will be happy with your husband this very day. There, now,” said Katie, “go on deck; the only fault I find with you is that you are too handsome, and that you make all those fellows up there so sorry that you are married, poor fellows! I do pity them when I see them trying to say something complimentary to you, but are afraid of your eyes to do so, as I heard one of them say the other day.”

“Ah! Katie, you must not be such a flatterer; however, I know what you are at now, you want me to laugh at your absurdity, so I forgive you this time, and somehow you do make me feel better and happier. I do believe it must be the Evil 216 One, as you say, who torments me, and I will drive him away. Did I tell you, Katie,” she continued, “that those horrid forebodings tormented me the week after my marriage, when first we heard of gold being discovered in California, and before Mr. Harvey said a word of wishing to leave me to go to California. Was it not strange?”

“No,” said Katie, “because the bad One saw you were too happy, and he wanted to bother you; that is his old trick.”

Mrs. Harvey could not help laughing outright at Katie's off-hand and confident way of accounting for thoughts and feelings that gave her so much trouble. The dark shadows that but a few moments before had oppressed her so heavily were now almost wholly gone; she began to feel light hearted, joyous and happy in the almost certainty, it now appeared to her, of being in another hour, perhaps, clasped in the arms of her loved husband. Before going on deck she turned once more to Katie, and once more took her hand; this time, in a totally different manner. There was a sweet, arch expression, almost a smile, on her lips, as she said:

“Katie, you are a good girl. I think you have a secret.”

At this Katie's handsome face crimsoned to her hair.

“I see I am right,” said Mrs. Harvey, with almost affection in her tone. “It is not through idle curiosity I speak to you now, but to say to you that though I feel very much disappointed at losing you, for I know I never can get a girl like you or one I can think half so much of, yet I am pleased with your choice, for from what the captain says of Peter, I think you cannot fail to be happy with him. He is of your own religion, and is moreover an excellent young man in every way. Is it settled between you?”

“Yes, ma'am; I believe so, if you do not object,” said Katie, her voice trembling a little as she spoke. She regained her self-possession, however, and raising Mrs. Harvey's hand to her lips she kissed it affectionately, and continued, “Peter says he has saved a handsome sum, out of which he has bought a nice little cottage in San Francisco, and that in a little more time he will have enough to get a partnership he is offered in a good wholesale grocery business, and that then he will give up his place here as assistant engineer and remain at home all the time. I am sure I do not know what he sees in me to make him so willing to share everything he has with me; but,” said Katie, with 217 an honest, womanly pride and frankness, “I know one thing; I will do my part, and do all I can to be a good, loving and useful wife to him. Of course I will never leave you and Mr. Harvey until you are all nicely fixed, and have suited yourselves in another girl.”

“I feel sure of that, Katie,” said Mrs. Harvey, “and I do not care how good Peter is or how much money he has saved; the bargain is as good for him as it can be for you; and now, Katie, if we can do anything for you both, to make things run smoothly, you have only to mention it, to be sure of the right response. There, I must go on deck; the captain may have something to tell me. I spoke to you of your own affairs, as you might want to speak to Peter before you went on shore.”

As Mrs. Harvey finished speaking, she turned round to the little table, and without allowing Kate an opportunity to thank her, dropped on her knees in prayer. Katie joined her, and for five minutes God and His angels alone filled their thoughts, as they implored protection in their new home.

As Mrs. Harvey came on deck the steamer was just passing the now famous Alcatraz Island, at that time the undisturbed residence of thousands of wild fowl. She joined Mr. and Mrs. Dicks, under whose protection she had made the voyage. In a moment they were surrounded by twenty gentlemen, all of whom seemed anxious to have a parting word with the charming girl. She was kind, polite and affable to all, and to all equally so. There was something of the queen in her bearing towards them; something that made them feel that they were her subjects and must stand at a distance, and respect as much as they admired. To their joyous jokes of the approaching sad loss of her grass widowhood and freedom, she retorted with charming wit, and in the general mirth and laughter half hid the enchanting blush that the allusion spread on her cheeks. The captain now came forward, and said in the kindest manner:

“I congratulate you sincerely, Mrs. Harvey, on your approaching happiness; but I want to tell you that I am full two days ahead of our usual time, and therefore that you must not be *too much* disappointed if Mr. Harvey is not here before the river boats get in to-night.”

Mrs. Harvey did feel very much disappointed. Her cheeks grew pale, and she did not speak. The captain continued:

“I could not see you this morning when the pilot-boat was 218 leaving, so I took the liberty of writing a note to your cousin, Mr. Philips, whom I know very well, to say that you were on board; so he will meet you, in any event, as the steamer drops the anchor.”

“Thank you, Captain,” said Mrs. Harvey; “you were very kind to think of me with all your own duties pressing you at such a time.”

“Oh,” said the captain, “to see to my passengers is one of my duties. and in this case a most pleasing one.”

“Thank you, thank you, Captain, a thousand times, for this and all your other kind attentions, to which I owe so much of the pleasure of my voyage.” As she said this she extended her hand to him with frank cordiality, and continued: “If you ever have time to visit us in our new home, be assured

of a most welcome reception from my husband as well as myself, and it may perhaps give us an opportunity of showing you how sincerely we appreciate all your kind attentions.”

Just at that moment, while the Captain was replying in his own gallant way, the steamer dropped her anchor and the boats from shore surrounded her. In a minute more Henry Philips, Mrs. Harvey's cousin, was before her. He greeted her with the same warm affection he would have done a loved sister, calling her “Darling Cousin Ellen.”

In the following chapters Ellen's story is told by Henry Philips, as he repeated it to me.

CHAPTER II.

A PLEASANT LUNCH PARTY—RETROSPECT.

To Cousin Ellen's eager inquiry for Frank, I told her that he was not in San Francisco, but would be as soon as the river boats got in that night. “We did not expect the steamer,” I told her, “until the day after to-morrow. But do not fear, we will take care of you, dear cousin, until he comes,” said I.

Ellen tried hard, I saw, to hide her disappointment as much as it was possible, and busied herself introducing me to Mr. and Mrs. Dicks, who were compelled to leave that afternoon in the Sacramento boat.

“Then,” said I, “I will myself stay on board until Frank gets here. I know how you are disappointed, cousin Ellen, but it cannot be helped, and you can just pass the time in telling me all about my dear father and mother, Aunt Mary and Uncle John; and all about my own little Jennie, and how she gets on without me. You know you will not have time to tell me after Frank arrives.”

I spoke in such joyous spirits that Ellen could not but feel happy, though disappointed. Just then Katie made her appearance. She was an old acquaintance of mine, having lived with my aunt, Mary Harvey, for some years; so I shook both her hands and welcomed her to California, saying at the same time that I had a husband picked out for her, all ready to marry her on sight. Katie laughed and blushed, and before she could reply Ellen told me that she thought I was too late, for

that Katie's market was made, and well made, too. At this I pretended to be very mad, and declared the fellow I had engaged her to would undoubtedly sue me for a breach of promise, as women in California were very scarce. Just then came a message from the Captain that lunch was waiting for Mrs. Harvey and her friend. Ellen took my arm, and we descended to the cabin. There we found spread a lunch that looked most inviting. It would, in fact, have done honor to a first-class hotel.

220

“Why,” said Ellen, “is *this* California, and does it afford such a lunch as that before us?”

“Oh, Mrs. Harvey,” said the Captain, evidently pleased, “this is nothing to what you will find on shore.”

I personally knew almost all present who had come on board to welcome the Captain. There was Mr. Merideth, the popular agent of the Pacific Mail Company, Charles Minturn, John W. Geary, William D. M. Howard, Charles Griswold, David C. Broderick, John Middleton and several other prominent citizens of our new State. I recollect well how delighted Cousin Ellen was with this California company. She seemed to enjoy their easy, off-hand ways, so entirely devoid of formalities, and she said to me, afterwards, that it appeared to her, after the first five minutes had passed, that she had been acquainted with the Captain's guests all her life. Cousin Ellen was, of course, the center of attraction, for in those days a lady in California felt herself a queen, with but few to dispute her sway. I have since often thought of this lunch, and when I do Cousin Ellen's sweet, ringing laugh comes back to me with indescribable sadness.

Now I must go back and give you some of Frank Harvey's and Ellen's early history, so that their characters may be understood, while I faithfully relate the events that followed fast after that lunch:

Well, to commence with myself, I am the only son of John Philips, of the well-known firm of Philips & Moncks, wholesale grocery merchants of Philadelphia. My father had a sister, who married a Mr. Steward, a lawyer in handsome practice in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. They had but one child, whom they called Ellen, and her they left an orphan at the age of eight years, both father and mother having died of cholera in one short week. On hearing the sad news, my father at once

went to Lancaster, collected all of the property (and it was not much) his brother-in-law had left, and invested it for little Ellen, whom he brought to our house to be her future home. She was a perfect little beauty, and as good as she was beautiful. My mother had a sister Mary, who was married to a Mr. Harvey, a rich farmer near Harrisburg. They also had but one child, a son, whom they called Francis. About the time Ellen lost her parents, Frank, then fourteen years old, lost his father. Mrs. Harvey remained on her farm, and an old bachelor brother of hers, Uncle John Grant, came to live with her, taking charge of her 221 business, and so they lived to their deaths. Frank, by the urgent invitations of my father, had lived much with us in the city, and had always attended the same schools I did. Now, we were more than ever together. Little Ellen was a new feature in our house, a perfect little beam of sunshine for us all, and we all vied with each other in acts of loving kindness to her. She was every one's pet and darling. Frank and Ellen were both my cousins, but they were not cousins to each other; nevertheless, we called each other cousin, all round. The Grant family were an old Catholic family from Maryland, so that mother and Aunt Mary Harvey were both Catholics; and as father left all religious training to mother, we were all three brought up strict Catholics. So passed four years of the happiest childhood that ever mortal children knew; not one cloud, worth naming, can I recollect to have crossed our path in all that time. Ellen was now nearly thirteen and we boys were eighteen, when father announced that he wished us to go to Georgetown College and Ellen to the famous Catholic school at Emmetsburg. We were glad to go; but, oh, how hard we found it to part with our sweet little Nellie. It seemed so lonesome that she should go away alone. The day came, however, and as Ellen parted with each of us, she kissed and hugged us and sobbed as if her little heart would break. That was one of the days in my past life I shall never forget. Frank and I remained three years at Georgetown; Ellen remained four years at Emmetsburg, and it so happened that Frank and Ellen never met in all that time, for, though all our vacations were spent at home, yet the Emmetsburg vacation was at a different time from ours.

I had seen her twice during the last year of her school, but Frank, on both occasions, was unavoidably absent at his mother's. At length they met. How changed were both since the day Ellen so lovingly flung her arms around Frank's neck, and, while sobbing herself, kissed and wiped his tears away, telling him not to cry, for they would soon meet again. Frank was now a tall, handsome,

fine-looking man, with whiskers to match his dark hair, instead of the smooth, boyish face and figure he had then. Ellen stood, a beautiful, fully developed, charming woman, instead of the weeping child he had left her. I was by when they met. It was a scene I would not have missed for anything. Ellen had been at home a week when Frank arrived from his mother's. When Ellen heard that Frank was in the 222 parlor she rushed in to see him. Frank, hearing her step, ran to the door to meet her, and he evidently thought to clasp her in his arms as he had so often done of old. The door opened—they met; but, instead of embracing each other, they stopped short, and each regarded the other in perfect amazement for perhaps half a minute, without a word of utterance. I could see that there was pleasure and unbounded admiration, as well as astonishment in the countenance of each. Ellen was the first to recover herself. She extended her hand and said:

“Why, Frank, dear Frank! I am so glad to see you.”

Frank grasped her hand as he said:

“And is this *all* after being away four years?”

“But, Frank, you are a man.”

“But, Cousin Ellen, you are a woman.

“Yes, I know, dear Frank; but we are not, in fact, cousins, you know, and I am sorry we are not, and both children, as we used to be.”

She said this with a tender earnestness that awoke a new, strange feeling in Frank's heart.

“And I would be a child forever,” said he, half reproachfully, “rather than endure such a cold meeting as this with you.”

“We cannot help having grown up, even if we are sorry for it, dear Frank,” said Ellen, half laughing; “so let us make the best of it, and not be foolish.”

In a few days, it appeared to me they became reconciled to the change time had wrought in them, and I fully believe that Ellen was not so sorry after all that Frank was not, in fact, her cousin, as she expressed it, and was a handsome grown-up man, nor do I believe Frank was so very sorry that Ellen was a beautiful woman. Anyway, if they were sorry, they showed it in a very strange way, for neither seemed to be happy except the other was in sight. Here I will just mention, though I am not writing a word of my own history, that at the time I am now speaking of, I had a little sweetheart myself, a perfect little witch, that could make me happy or miserable for a week, with just one look; a great pet, too, of my father and mother, Miss Jennie Moncks, daughter of my father's partner. When I left home for California, Jennie and I were engaged, and she was in the habit of writing letters to me, full of tormenting fun. Sometimes she would tell me in glowing terms about returned Californias hunting for wives, who visited her, 223 telling her of the beauties of California, life and showing her lots of eight-sided fifty-dollar gold slugs, common then in San Francisco, to tempt her to forget me. Then she would sometimes write very seriously, asking me such impertinent questions as:

“When were you last at confession, and do you say your prayers regularly, morning and evening?”

When I pretended to take offence at this sort of a letter, she would write:

“Well, darling, I cannot help it, if you do get mad with your little Jennie. We are taught, you know, that there never was a man, or woman either, who can depend on themselves to keep in the right road. The Old Boy is after us all, and he will surely get us, if God is not with us in the fight; so I want you to pray morning and night for us both, that God may be near us in all temptations, and I will do the same.”

So my next letter to her would be a “make-up,” and I felt that, perhaps, it was well for me that I had some one to pray for me and keep me straight, for if there ever was a place where the Old Boy walked out in open daylight it was San Francisco at that time. As I dislike talking of myself, I will finish all of my own history that I am disposed to give, by saying that in the Spring of 1851 I

returned to Philadelphia, fulfilled my engagement with Miss Jennie Moncks, and brought back to my California home as true a wife as ever stood by man's side in the battle of life.

But, to return to my story. Frank and myself entered the house of Philips & Moncks, as clerks, for one year. Then we were to become partners in the house, and, after five years, to succeed to the business, when it was agreed that my father and Mr. Moncks were to retire from the firm. The firm was then one of the most flourishing in the city, so our prospects were as bright as bright could be, and oh, what a happy year that year of our clerkship was to us all four. No care of business beyond our daily duties, and these were not too burdensome. Our evenings, our holidays, our Sundays, were all spent together. No one went to a party or place of amusement if all were not to be there. At home we were a little party in ourselves. At times, Ellen and Jennie played and sang for us; other evenings, mother played the piano for us all to dance. Sometimes, Frank and I would read some new and interesting book, aloud, while mother gave lessons to the girls, in making shirts or something equally useful. Sometimes we had a game of whist or some amusing game in which father and mother and Jennie's parents, who were often at our house, would join. Our devotions were at the same church. Our night prayers were said together, and always opened with a chapter in the Bible or some religious book, read by father, Frank or myself. As I look back, now, on that year of my life, it appears to my memory without a tear of sorrow or one sad sigh, that I can draw to mind. I did not then know I loved Jennie, and I feel sure that Ellen and Frank had no idea how deeply they loved each other. All we knew was that we felt exquisitely happy, and that the world appeared to us an opening paradise. Frank, from his childhood, was remarkable for his love of truth and a high sense of honor. I believe he would have suffered death, at any time, rather than violate his promise, once given, or willfully deceive any one, by word or act, in the most trivial matter. "Truth, fidelity and constancy," he would say, "constitute the atmosphere of heaven, without which, it could not be the abode of God and his angels, while falsehood, inconstancy and deception of all kinds make the fuel that supplies and keeps alive the flames in the abode of the wicked."

Ellen fully shared with Frank in all these noble sentiments. She had a decided character of her own, and it would have been impossible, I know, for her to have ever loved a man whose honor, fidelity and truth was not beyond all question. They both had, perhaps, one fault, and, so far as the human

eye could discern, it was the only one. It was the same St. Peter had, too much self-reliance; too confident, too proud, as it were, of their own determination to be good. If this was so, they were both unconscious of it. About the first of August, 1848, Frank went home to make his mother a visit, just six weeks before he and I were to enter the firm of Philips & Moncks, as partners. His mother was yet young, only nineteen years older than Frank himself. His uncle, John Grant, was twenty years older than Frank's mother, a fine, hale, hearty old gentleman, devoted to his sister and to Frank, and, if you saw them all together, you would have supposed that he was the father of both. Their manner to him was always loving and respectful; his to them devoted and fatherly. They were both delighted to see Frank. His mother hugged and kissed him, and then pushed him away, that she might look at him the better, and then embraced and kissed him again, while tears ran down her handsome face. John Grant laughed at his sister for being so foolish, so he said, as to cry; but Katie, Mrs. Harvey's hired girl, declared that she saw shining drops on the old gentleman's own cheeks.

"I cannot help it," said Mrs. Harvey; "Frank has grown so handsome, and looks so very like his own dear father."

When they sat to meals, Frank had to take his old place between them, and tell them all the city news and all the good jokes he had heard while away, to make them laugh and amuse them. Both uncle and mother soon discovered that nothing pleased Frank so well as to talk to him of Ellen Steward. In fact, they found it was very hard to get him to talk of anybody else.

John Grant waited one day until Frank had left the room, and then, turning to Mrs. Harvey, said:

"Well, sister Mary, what do you think of it?"

"Of what?" said Mrs Harvey.

"Why, of course, of Frank and Ellen Steward getting married; you see his head is full of her. Poor fellow! I was once like him," added the old gentleman, with a deep sigh.

"Well, brother," said Mrs. Harvey, "What do *you* think of it?"

“Of course,” said John, “I think they had better get married out of hand. You know I have the ten thousand dollars all ready that you are to pay to Philips & Moncks on the fifteenth of October, the day Frank is to be taken into the firm as a partner, and then Ellen has a few thousands of her own, so I see nothing in the way. I always loved Ellen dearly. Her father was an old friend of mine, and she is a noble girl, just the one, in my view, for Frank.”

Mrs. Harvey remained in deep thought for some moments, while her brother walked up and down the breakfast parlor. At length she said:

“Ellen is surely a noble, dear, good girl, as you and Frank both say. She is beautiful and accomplished. What more could I want for my darling son? But,” she continued, covering her face with her handkerchief, to hide flowing tears, “I will then be alone, for Frank will love Ellen so much he will forget me.”

“Alone?” repeated her brother slowly, in a sorrowful, reproachful tone. In a moment Mrs. Harvey's arms were around her brother's neck, and, while she kissed his cheek, she said:

226

“Forgive me, brother; you misunderstood me. Do not think that, for a moment, I can ever forget or undervalue your unselfish love and devotion to me since the day of my sad loss; but, brother, shall we not *both* miss Frank when he is married?”

“You are mistaken, Mary,” said John, “for I know Ellen so well that I know you will gain a daughter, and not lose a son, by this marriage.”

After a little more conversation, Mrs. Harvey became not only reconciled, but now anxious for the marriage. That day, when she took her usual ride out with Frank, she asked him if Ellen had any admirers.

“Admirers, mother!” said he. “Why, every one admires her.”

“Oh, but I mean lovers,” said Mrs. Harvey.

“Lovers!” repeated Frank, in astonishment; “of course, she has none. I should like to see the fellow that would have the impudence to set up to be *her* lover.”

As Frank said this, he tickled Mrs. Harvey's blooded horses with his whip in a most impatient manner, exciting the animals so as to make it difficult to hold them.

“Are you sure, Frank,” said Mrs. Harvey, with emphasis, “that Ellen has not *one* lover?”

“I am, mother, quite sure,” said Frank, looking at his mother earnestly, and with a half frightened expression in his countenance. Seeing a smile playing on his mother's face, he suddenly reined up his horses, and, turning toward her, said, in a beseeching tone: “Mother, *dear* mother, you pain me very much; tell me what you mean?”

“And why, darling, do I pain you? Surely you have no objection that Ellen should have a lover, if he is the right sort of a man.”

“But, dear mother, Ellen Steward *has no lover*; so, darling mother, tell me what you mean.”

“Well my son, I will tell you what I mean,” said Mrs. Harvey, with a serious manner and countenance. “It is this: I am well convinced that Ellen Steward *has* a lover, and I think it is time *you* should know it. *I* know who he is, and he is one who I think is in every way a suitable match for her and worthy of her, and, what is more, I think she loves him. Now, dear Frank, as Ellen is a dear friend, you should be glad to hear all this, and of course you are.”

“I glad,” said Frank, as he brought his whip down with a 227 vengeance on his unoffending horses. The animals were too high strung to stand this extraordinary treatment, so off they plunged and dashed headlong towards the city of Harrisburg. Mrs. Harvey grew deadly pale with fright, seeing Frank was unable to stem their furious flight. As they neared the Susquehannah river it took all his efforts to guide them to the bridge, but he did succeed, and the moment the horses found themselves

under the cover of that magnificent structure, the pride of all Pennsylvanians, they became tractable and entirely in hand once more. This incident prevented further conversation at that time between mother and son. That evening, after Uncle John had retired, Frank came to kiss his mother good-night. When she took his hand it was cold, and his face looked sad and pale.

“What is the matter, my darling child; are you unwell?” said she, in alarm. Frank, without speaking, dropped into the seat by her, and, raising her hand to his lips, kissed it, saying:

“Dear mother, what you told me to-day, I find has made me perfectly miserable.”

“Why, Frank?” she asked.

“Because, mother, I find that it will kill me if Ellen loves any man.” Here he hesitated, and his mother added:

“But yourself, I suppose.”

“Oh, mother, I cannot say how that is, but I am sure that if I love Ellen in the way you mean, I did not know it before, and now, my darling mother, tell me who this fellow is who loves her, and whom you say she loves in return, in which I know you must be mistaken, mother.”

“The person I mean, my darling boy, is not far from here.”

“Not far from here? Mother, who can you mean?”

“Yes,” said Mrs. Harvey; “it is so, and his is now in this room.”

At this Frank jumped to his feet, and, looking the whole room over, said:

“Surely, mother, we are alone.”

“Then,” said Mrs. Harvey, with a look of love and playful fun, “if I am right, one of us must be Ellen's happy, favored lover.”

For the first time Frank read his mother's meaning. Without a word, he threw his arms around her neck, and said:

“Yes, mother; you are right. I am Ellen's lover, and I trust you are right, too, in thinking that she loves in return. Thank you, my darling mother, for showing me the truth.”

228

The next day, Frank and his mother and Uncle John had a long talk, the result of which was that Frank started back to Philadelphia on the following Monday. Just as he was seated in the stage, Uncle John whispered in his ear:

“Dear boy, if you and Ellen bring matters to a close, mind there are two thousand dollars more, of my private fund, that I am going to give you.”

“Thank—thank you, my dear devoted Uncle,” said Frank, as the coach started off.

What a wild excitement was in Frank's heart the whole way as he returned to Philadelphia. Over and over again he rehearsed the scene that was so soon to take place between himself and Ellen. He did not look forward to it wholly without doubt and fear as to its result. What man ever does? For sometimes he would say to himself: “What if mother was mistaken?” But hope and confidence predominated, and when his imagination would conclude the scene to his entire satisfaction, he was happy to half-intoxication.

He surprised us all by his arrival, as we did not expect him for another week. However, we showed him by our reception that we were delighted to see him. He avoided our oft-repeated question as to what caused his early return. Ellen, who during Frank's absence had been thoughtful and almost sad, was now all gaiety and life. As she met Frank, every feature of her face was beaming with pleasure, and she said:

“I am delighted, Frank, to see you. But do tell us to what we owe the happiness of your sudden return.”

He hesitated a moment; then, taking her hand, said:

“It is a secret just now, but I will confide it to *you*,” and, drawing her close to him, he whispered in her ear: “I came darling Nellie, solely to be near *you* and to *speak to you*.”

Ellen's heart bounded, and a deep blush suffused her face. Why, she could not tell. It was, that there was something tender and meaning, if not loving, in Frank's voice and manner; something new; something she had never noticed before; something that awoke a feeling in her heart that was wondrous sweet and strange. That night when she retired to her rest, she repeated his words over and over—“I came, darling Nellie, solely to be near you and to speak to you,”—and each time the simple words sent the same wondrous joy through every nerve of her system. “Is *this* love?” she whispered low to herself. “Oh, yes; it must be, for I feel now that the journey through the world would be lonesome and weary, and all its future for me a blank, if Frank was not to be by my side to aid and guard my steps and cheer the way, and that I would die to make him happy.”

Thus one happy sweet reflection chased another until all her waking thoughts were lost in sleep. If child-like innocence and angelic purity should bring happy, blissful dreams, surely they were Cousin Ellen's that night.

Yes, dear cousin; it is love you have discovered in your heart this night. Love so unbounded, so confiding, so undoubting, so absorbing, that it is almost worship rather than love, and though Frank, who has won it, would not for all the world's honors, or for any consideration on earth, yield up one ray of its intensity and warmth, yet he will find it a dangerous, if it is a delightful treasure; for, if in life's journey, through human frailty, he should make one false step, you will find it hard to make yourself believe he was the being you loved and to summon charity to aid you in forgiving, where you cannot now believe *there could* be a fault. Sleep on, sweet cousin; dream over and over those happy dreams that now cover your face in sleep with smiles and blushes. Would that they were all realized in after life, and then I should not have had to add your sad story to the record of the woes that California brought to many a quiet and happy household, when her untold treasures became known.

CHAPTER III.

THE PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE.

Aunt Mercy, Frank's mother, had announced by letter to my mother Frank's intention of asking for Ellen's hand; so, that very night the old folks took the matter under consideration and concluded, with great pleasure, to favor his suit. The result was, therefore, that when Frank came to see mother the next morning on the subject, she did not wait for him to speak, but, throwing her arm around his neck, kissed him, and told him to go and speak with his uncle. Father enjoyed Frank's embarrassment very much, and for some time pretended not to view the matter favorably; but at length took pity on his almost sad face, and, walking over to him, he kissed his cheek, and, laying his hand on his head, said, in a voice full of love and kindness:

“God bless you, my boy. Go and see Ellen, and if she herself wishes it I will give her to you with more pleasure than I would to any man living. Mind, Frank, she is a priceless treasure. She has always been a most loving daughter to me. I never had any other, and if God had sent me one, I feel I could not have loved her more than I do my sweet, darling Nellie. Take her, Frank,” he continued, while tears glistened in his eyes; “but mind, I know she believes you what no man, or woman either, wholly is—perfect. So be careful and watch that she may never be harshly undeceived, for the consequences might be terrible.”

“Thanks, thanks, Uncle, a thousand times over and over,” said Frank, kissing my father's hand, “for your consent, and for the advice you give me with it, which I promise never to forget.”

“Trust in God, dear boy, for your strength to do so,” said my father, solemnly; and, again blessing him, they parted.

Frank, now, with bounding hope, sought Ellen. He found her in the conservatory at her usual work for that hour in the morning, watering, trimming and arranging her favorite flowers.

“Nellie,” said Frank, as he approached her, holding out his hand.

“Frank,” she responded, taking his hand in hers, and blushing, she knew not why. Happy, happy Frank; happy, happy Ellen exchanged warm, true vows of love and fidelity. Seal them, Frank, with a kiss so pure and holy that the angel who records can approve. Yes, dear cousins; enjoy, to its utmost, that short but most happy hour—that hour that comes but once in any man's life; that hour the like of which is never found in any other part of all life's journey from the cradle to the grave; that hour, the bliss of which can never be comprehended by the mercenary, selfish and unloving.

I shall attempt no discussion of this scene between Ellen and Frank, but leave it to be enjoyed in imagination.

In the afternoon of that day, it became known to us all that Frank and Ellen were engaged. The news was hailed with joy by every one, and congratulations poured in upon them from all their friends. At our home all was gaiety and happiness; never was there a betrothal more promising of a bright future than that of Frank Harvey and Ellen Steward. The wedding day was fixed to be the day after Frank and myself were to become partners in the firm of Philips & Moncks. That great day at length came, as all such days will. I shall never forget it. It stands out in my memory in bold relief, as do other days marked by either joy or sorrow, and like them it is ever present when my thoughts are on the past. The marriage ceremony was in St. Joseph's Church. Rev. Father Bacbelin officiated. I stood up with Frank; Jennie Moncks with Ellen. Aunt Mary, Frank's mother, and Uncle John Grant were there, of course. The church was crowded with friends, and all were extravagant in their praise and admiration of the young couple whose union they had come to honor. This was not surprising, for Ellen was certainly of unsurpassing beauty, and Frank, in form, face and bearing, was just such as you would imagine a girl like Ellen would love and marry. After the ceremony, when Aunt Mary, mother and father saluted the bride, they could not conceal their tears and agitation, but they were tears that told of overflowing happiness, not of sorrow. On our return from church, we did justice to mother's splendid breakfast. After breakfast, the happy loved ones set out on a visit to relatives in Baltimore. They were then to join Frank's mother at her own home, and, after a little while, to return to Philadelphia and go to housekeeping, like old married folks, and

Frank was to settle down in business for all 232 time to come; and so I wish it were, and so it might have been, if it was not for California and her gold.

In the Spring of that year, 1848, Philip & Moncks had shipped a large consignment of flour to Buenos Ayres. The return account sales reached our firm on the first of November, the very day Frank and Ellen arrived home from their wedding trip. The speculation had proven unfortunate, and a loss to the old firm of over seventy-five thousand dollars. This was followed by an equally disastrous account sales of cotton shipped to Liverpool, also on account of the old firm. These large losses did not shake in the least the credit and standing of our house, but both Frank and myself saw that it would be only right for us to offer to modify the terms on which we had been admitted members of the firm. We did so promptly, and while the matter was under consideration accounts reached Philadelphia of the wonderful discovery of gold in California. The accounts from there, though true in the main, were so astonishing that at first they were looked upon as fabulous. But then came the testimony of Governor Mason, who forwarded statements of the gold discoveries to the Secretary of War at Washington. Then came a letter from Thomas O. Larkin, late United States Consul at Monterey. Then letters from J. D. Stevenson, Colonel of the California-New York regiment, and Captain Folsom, United States Paymaster in San Francisco, all of which seemed to establish the truth of the gold discoveries beyond all question. Now arose the never-to-be-forgotten California fever and excitement all over the country, from Maine to Texas. Nothing was talked of, nothing was thought of, but California and her gold. To go to California, fathers left their wives and children, without even a reasonable prospect of support in their absence; sons left their widowed mothers and dependent sisters to struggle on for themselves; newly-married men left their brides, often in the hands of strangers, and unprotected; lovers left their sweethearts with vows of fidelity on their lips, in some cases only to be remembered, in the excitement and bustle of California life, as the aged wicked recall to memory the pure and good resolutions and promises of their innocence and youth. All, without regard to consequences, rushed madly on in the pursuit of gold! *Gold; gold!* was their cry by day and the subject of their dreams by night. Everything, from Heaven to Hell, but *gold* and its acquisition seemed 233 for a time forgotten. From the first I noticed that Frank took the greatest interest in the accounts from California, and I feared the consequences. He said but little

about it, however, at home, until the day we received Governor Mason's published statements, and that of Thomas O. Larkin. That day Ellen had been out nearly all day with mother, as she had been for several days previously, looking up a suitable house for Frank and herself. As we returned to dinner, she met us in the hall, and, running to Frank for her kiss, she said:

“Oh, dear Frank, we have found such a nice house; I know you will be pleased with it. It has a beautiful garden, and everything just as you told me you would like. I know you will take it the moment you see it. The rent, too, is moderate.”

Frank seemed for a moment embarrassed, but, kissing her again, he said:

“If it suits you, my darling, I know it will be just what I want.”

His manner and voice did not escape the quick perception of his young wife. While yet his arm was around her waist, she quickly turned towards him, and, laying one hand on his shoulder, with the other she raised the clustering hair from his high forehead, and, gazing for an instant with eager earnestness into his face, she said, in a questioning tone:

“Surely, you are not unwell, my darling; or has some more bad news come for the firm?”

“No, dearest; I was never better, and we have had no more bad news, I assure you,” said he, half embarrassed and half annoyed, as he withdrew his arm from her waist. Without saying a word, she slipped her arm in his, and, pressing it close to her side, walked on with him in silence.

Frank felt the gentle appeal, and answered it, in a manner, by saying:

“My own gentle, darling wife, do not for an instant suppose I am withholding, or wish to withhold, one thought of my heart from you. No; a thought, a feeling, a wish or aspiration entertained by me in which I could not let you share would become to me an intolerable burden. No, my wife; you shall always share, for it is your right, all that is mine to share, be it joy or be it sorrow, even to my thoughts, let the consequences be what they may to either of us.”

While he spoke, Ellen's eyes, though swimming in moisture, were beaming with love, full on his face. He continued:

234

“What you observed in my manner this evening was, that my head is full of the wonderful news from California. Governor Mason and the United States Consul at Monterey have sent home statements that fully corroborate all the strange stores of gold-finding we have been reading of for some weeks past. Aladdin's Lamp is nowhere compared to the wonders of the Sacramento and San Joaquin, and other localities in California, where every man can be his own Geni and call up from the earth, at will, boundless wealth.”

“And do you really believe all this, Frank?” said Ellen.

“How can I doubt it? You shall judge for yourself, for after dinner I will read for you the Mason and Larkin statements.”

At dinner the only topic was California, and after dinner Frank, as he had promised, read aloud for us all the accounts of the gold discoveries, as given by Governor Mason and others. Father was indisposed to believe, in full, the accounts, and urged that, though there was gold there, undoubtedly, yet it would require labor and capital to obtain it. Ellen joined warmly in this view, and I could see that she looked pale, troubled and anxious the whole evening. I thought to myself:

“Well, all poor Ellen's little castles of a contented home, in which she was to be the happy queen and Frank her idol, are likely to disappear just as she thought she was going to realize them.”

That night, when they retired to their room, Ellen said, in an assumed, careless voice:

“Well, old fellow, you have not said a word to me of our new home; the house I selected for us to-day.”

“No, dearest, I have not; but to-morrow we will talk it all over. Will not that do?”

Poor Ellen! She could hardly keep from giving way to her feelings in tears, but, overcoming herself, she said, in a low, half-choked voice:

“Well, leave it until then.”

Frank was so full of California he did not observe the tone of her answer, and her feelings remained unknown to him. He soon fell asleep, for, though excited, he was very tired; but in his dreams he was on the Sacramento river. He murmured words in his sleep, but the only one Ellen could distinguish was that now odious one to her, “Gold!” Ellen could not sleep. But yesterday her heart was full of worldly happiness, and life's path in the future looked all so bright and full of sunshine that it seemed impossible that a cloud or storm was near; yet, now, a strange, troubled feeling oppressed her—a fear, as it were, of some approaching calamity, she knew not what, that foreboded to her the utter destruction of her bright visions of married life. She sometimes felt as though some demon was struggling to possess himself of her darling husband, and separate them for time and eternity. She tried to shake off the horrid thoughts and feelings as they crowded on her, but her efforts were vain, and now her poor head ached and her lips became dry and parched. Without awakening Frank, she arose from her bed, and walked in the moonlight to her little oratory. There, dropping on her knees, with clasped hands and bowed head, she sought relief in earnest prayer. “Heavenly Father,” she murmured, “save and guard and guide my husband, and if it be Thy holy will to part us and that I shall walk the earth alone, be it so; I will not murmur if Thou but lead us both together to Thy throne in Heaven in the end.” Then she prayed for courage and resolution to bear up, as He would have her do, in the trial she felt to be impending. With the last words of her prayer, the fountain of her heart seemed thrown open, and floods of tears came rushing to her relief. She arose from her knees so perfectly calmed and resigned that her heart was filled with gratitude to Heaven. She stole back to her bed, and, leaning over her almost worshiped husband, she gazed on his face as though she wished once more to imprint every line and feature of his countenance on the inmost recesses of her heart. It was a long, earnest gaze. She smiled as she said, half-aloud:

“He never loved any one but me,” and, stooping, she kissed his forehead. Then, nestling more closely into her place, sleep soon came to soothe and calm her excited nerves.

CHAPTER IV.

DEPARTURE FOR CALIFORNIA.

With Ellen the great struggle was over, and it did not take her by surprise the next day when Frank, seating himself by her, told her that he thought of going to California. He explained to her all the advantages it was sure, as he said, to bring. In the first place, he could not think of remaining in the firm as full partner after the great losses the house had sustained. It would be ungenerous to his uncle to do so, and then he would only be one year away. He would not only make a fortune for himself, but also be enabled to help Philips & Moncks to make up their losses by selling goods for them in the California market. It would be an advantage, too, to Cousin Henry, he urged. “And then, my darling, angel wife,” he went on, “I wish to make this sacrifice for *you*. I long to see you mistress of a magnificent establishment, which I will build on my return on the banks of the Delaware, or, perhaps, if you prefer it, the Hudson, for you to preside over as queen, and there shall be none in all the land who will not covet the acquaintance of my wife. Then her wealth and position will be in keeping with her beauty and accomplishments. I do not say this to flatter, darling. If I did, I would despise myself; but you do not know how I yearn to see you in the position nature intended you for; acknowledged by all to be the first among the first.”

While he spoke, Ellen kept his hand in hers, and calmly gazed on his face.

“I would not be a wife worth having,” she said, “if I doubted the sincerity of a word you have spoken; but, my darling husband, do you know that I would rather live my life in the plainest cottage in Philadelphia, and be totally unknown to all the world, if you were there, contented and happy, than live in a mansion of Eastern magnificence with a thousand slaves at my feet, if this worldly grandeur was to cost me one year's absence from *you*. Oh, Frank, we have sworn ‘until death never to part.’ Let us be careful how we trifle with that solemn vow.”

Then, laying both her hands on his shoulders, while her bosom heaved and expanded, her eyes beaming with the light of suddenly-awakened hope that she could solve the difficulty and ward off the terrible blow, she continued with wild animation:

“Why, cannot I go with you? Oh, yes, Frank; do say I can go; you know that aunt is proud of my knowledge of every description of housewifery. There is no dish, she says, so plain or homely that my skill cannot do something to make it sweet and savory. There is none so rare and uncommon as to be entirely unknown to me. She boasts, too, of my needle, and says it would be as much at home in the miner's shirt or overalls as you have seen it in the embroidery you so much admired. Oh, yes, dearest; do say you will have me go. I will keep our little miner's cottage so neat, so bright, that it will be the envy of all. I will train wild roses to embower and shade it from the hot sun. Those beautiful California wild flowers shall decorate our table more charmingly than do costly ornaments the tables of the proud and wealthy. I will gather the wild mosses they tell us of there, and fashion for you to rest upon, when tired and weary, a lounge that luxury itself might envy; and then I will read to you or sing you some favorite song, which will take us back, in our thoughts, to our old home and to the happy days when we were children together.”

She went on, while her eyes swam with struggling tears:

“Oh, Frank, do not speak of difficulties or dangers in the way, for there is no mountain that I would think rugged or steep if you were but there to lead the way. There is no river or stream that to me would look dark or dangerous if you were but there to guard me. There is no desert plain or valley that to me would seem lonesome if you were but there to cheer me. There is no southern sun that to me would be unendurable, nor snow, nor north wind that I would not freely face, if you, my darling husband, were but there to love me. *Here, here,*” she continued, laying her hand on his heart, while her lips quivered with emotion, “*is my home, my world,* all the world I care or ask for.” With the last words her voice grew soft and lower until it was lost in his bosom, where she nestled her head.

Frank clasped her close to his heart, while his frame trembled as if in agony; his head leaned forward until their cheeks met. 238 For a few minutes neither spoke, but wept together the first sorrowing tears California had cost them. Then Frank murmured:

“I will not go, darling, if you cannot endure the trial.”

In that short sentence Frank had struck a chord that ever lies near the hearts of the unselfish, generous and brave. Ellen quickly raised her head, wiped all traces of her grief away; then, summoning to her aid all the strength of her great character, said in a calm, steady voice:

“My husband, I have made you unhappy; those tears on your cheeks frighten me.” While speaking she gently wiped them away with her own soft handkerchief. “Do not do your wife the injustice of supposing that she is so weak or childish that she cannot, with perfect contentment, do anything you may think right and proper for her to do, even if it involves a temporary separation. I would rather, as I have said, face deserts, snows and burning suns and be with you, than have all the wealth and grandeur on earth, and you away. Yet, my husband, depend on it I will feel happy, so happy, in doing whatever you think best for us both to do in this matter. What you say about the advantage it will be to our dear uncle, who has been more than a father to me and to Cousin Henry, who is as dear to me as ever brother was to sister, will make the sacrifice sweet and light; so cheer up, my darling, my consent is given, and given freely. One short year, and we will be again together, *never, oh never*, to part.”

Again Frank clasped her to his heart, while he exclaimed:

“Noble, noble girl! Generous, heroic wife! Priceless treasure of my inmost heart! Can I ever love and admire you half as much as you deserve to be admired and loved? But you shall see, my wife, I will strive to be worthy of you, and, my darling, you shall be the object of all the struggles and efforts I will make for success, not only in this California enterprise, but in everything I undertake, and do not allow yourself to imagine that this temporary separation is any trifling with the sacred vow we made to each other at the altar, never to part, for I but place you, as it were, in

the background for a moment to shield you from a danger that, unavoidably, crosses my path. No, my wife, believe me, I would rather die than even seem to trifle with that holy vow.”

“Be it so, be it so, my husband; and yet,” said Ellen, dropping her voice almost to a whisper, “something seems to tell me 239 that I could save you from a danger, if I were with you; but it is, I suppose, an idle thought, and I will try and not think of it.”

“There is no danger to me, my angel, be sure, that I cannot ward off; but there might be for us both if I were so rash as to expose you where common prudence forbids it.”

“I am satisfied, dear husband, and may God grant that we have decided right this day, and in the way most pleasing to Him.”

That and the next day all was arranged with our firm. Frank withdrew from it, and was to have twenty thousand dollars in goods consigned to him, for sale on joint account, in the California market. The goods were to be shipped by the Greyhound and Grey Eagle, one of which was about to sail from Baltimore, and the other from Philadelphia, for San Francisco. They were two of the first three clipper-built ships that entered the '49 California trade. The third was the Architect, which sailed a few days later from New Orleans. They were splendid ships, and made fine voyages; but they did not compare with that fleet of clippers the California trade so soon afterwards spread on the ocean, and which so astonished the marine world, not only for their matchless sailing qualities and freight capacity, but for the beauty of their structure and magnificence of their finish. Frank also bought goods and shipped them on his own account, and then took his passage by the first steamship that sailed for Panama. He arrived safely on the Pacific side of the Isthmus, but there he had some weary days to wait, as the steamer that was to take him to San Francisco had not yet arrived from her trip round Cape Horn. It came at last, however, and in due time Frank arrived in San Francisco in the first steamer that ever entered the Golden Gate. His judgment led him to believe that it would be best to locate himself as near the mines as possible, as they were, of course, the source of all trade in California at that time. He therefore established himself in business in S—.

From the day Ellen had given her entire consent until the day Frank left us, she was cheerful, and, to a casual observer, appeared happy. Frank's mother and uncle, John Grant, came to Philadelphia to see Frank off, and the arrangement was that Ellen was to go home with him and remain with Aunt Mary until Frank returned.

240

The sad morning of parting came. We sat down to a very early breakfast—the last we were ever all to eat together. This, of course, we did not know; yet we felt that it might be so. Frank sat between Ellen and his mother. I followed father's example in an effort to be cheerful myself and to make the rest so; without much success, however. Breakfast over, Frank arose to bid us all farewell. I will not attempt to describe that parting scene. It was so terribly sad that its memory haunts me to this day. Frank was no sooner out of sight than poor Ellen, who had held up all through with such heroic courage, now gave way and dropped into a death-like faint, from which she recovered only to relapse into another and another. Then came prostration, and in the afternoon of that day a burning fever, in which she lay for three long days between life and death. Aunt Mary and mother watched and nursed her day and night, by turns, and at length life, health and spirits all came back, slowly but surely, until Ellen was herself once more, cheerful and hopeful, if not wholly happy.

CHAPTER V.

SICKNESS—SUSAN MARSH, THE NURSE.

In six months after Frank left, I also went to California and established myself in business in San Francisco. Frank's success in California was all that any one could desire. In fact, every speculation he touched seemed to turn into gold in his hands. He made money for Philips & Moncks by tens of thousands. Every week he wrote to Ellen long, loving and always interesting letters. Her credit at our house in Philadelphia was, by his orders, unlimited, and so the year wore away; but, at its close, Frank found it almost impossible to wind up his business and return to Philadelphia as he had intended, so he sought and obtained Ellen's consent to remain one year more. In the following March he was taken most dangerously sick. He occupied the upper part of his store as a dwelling,

as was so common with us all in California to do at that time. His bookkeeper and clerks also lived with him, but slept in a room back of the office on the first floor. They had a Chinese boy for cook, so they lived comfortably, for Californians. When Frank fell sick the clerks and Mr. Neil, the bookkeeper, took turns in nursing him, and, though kind in their dispositions, they made very indifferent nurses; besides, they had not the time to spare from the business that it was necessary to give to Frank's sick-room. He grew worse and worse every day, until all became alarmed for his life. He wandered in his mind, and became unconscious of all around him. Mr. Neil now undertook to find a nurse, but for love or money none could be had. The attending physician then undertook to procure one, and did so. He introduced a young woman, Susan Marsh, as nurse. She was handsome, bright, neat and kind in her manner, and proved a most excellent nurse. There was nothing in her way of acting that gave the bookkeeper the least right to suppose that she was one of the unfortunates in character who were then, as now, 242 numerous in California. In those days it was often, as in the present instance, found impossible to procure nurses for the sick, and unthinking physicians sought, and frequently found, them in houses frequented only by the reckless and abandoned of both sexes. To such a house had Doctor Taylor resorted and found Susan March, who now nursed Frank with the kindest care. Three long weeks Frank lay unconscious of all around him, or of those who cared for him.

On Monday morning, three weeks from the day on which she had undertaken her task, Susan Marsh arose from her sofa-bed in the little room adjoining Frank's. She had watched late the previous night, and as a consequence slept late. The morning sun was beaming into both rooms full and bright. After a moment spent at her toilet, she walked with quick, noiseless step through the half-open door leading into Frank's room. Then she looked anxiously towards his bed. There was something, it appeared to her, unusual in the way Frank lay. She advanced with the same cautious, soft step to the bedside; then, bending over him, a smile of triumph played on her lips as she recognized a most happy change in her patient. Frank was evidently in a sweet, calm sleep. Thanks to her handiwork, everything on and about him was as neat and white as the driven snow. He was half on his side and half on his back, the bed-clothes partly thrown off. His arms extended so as to give perfect freedom to his great chest as it rose and sank just perceptibly, indicating a

sleep that was surely restoring health and strength. Then a smile, just such as we see on the face of a dreaming infant, passed over his countenance. It told as plainly of returning life as the first ray of the morning sun assures us that another day has come and is ours. As Susan Marsh continued to bend over him, she exclaimed, half to herself: “Oh, how handsome! What a splendid looking man! And it is I who have saved his life!”

Then, softly removing his clustering brown hair from his white forehead, she imprinted on it a passionate kiss. The sleeper started, and, half awakened, raised one arm as if in search of something; then murmured in an indescribably tender tone:

“Yes, my darling Nellie; I am better.”

In an instant Susan was at her full height; she flushed scarlet to her forehead, then as quickly became deadly pale. Her lips quivered and her frame shook as if a pang of bitter agony had pierced her through. Frank had again sunk into his life restoring sleep, and Susan hastily returned to her room. She closed the door as she entered, threw herself into the cane-bottom rocking chair that stood near the nursery fire, and, letting her head fall backwards to find rest, she clasped both her hands tightly over her eyes. For five minutes she remained motionless, seeming scarcely to breathe. Then, without removing her hands, with a half-suppressed moan, she dropped her head forward so as to rest it on her knees. Then, suddenly she started to her feet, and drew from her bosom three unopened letters. She read the address over slowly, “Frank Harvey, Esq., Merchant, S —, California.” While she did so, there was a bitter, contemptuous smile on her face that gave her dark eyes a wild, fierce look.

“Yes,” she said, speaking to herself. “They are from *her* —he shall never see them. Let me see,” she continued, “what the *loving* wife, who is too careful of herself to come to such a place as California, has to say to her far-off husband. I suppose she pretends to love him ever so much. Oh, you ‘California widows,’ as they call you back in the States, you are so fond of your ease and your own comfort that you forget what the meaning of the word *wife* is. You poor, miserable, creatures! you have no claim now to the husbands you refused to stand by in this their great struggle for

fortune and for fame. No! you are a contemptible set. You are not true American women. You are not true wives! even if it is *I*, an outcast, who tell you so, and all of you, who remained at home by your own desire, deserve all the miseries and woe that is in store for hundreds and hundreds of you.”

As she was speaking, she tore open the letters and read them all through. While she did so, she changed her position from standing to sitting, and again from sitting to standing; sometimes walking the floor with hurried steps. As she concluded the last letter, she walked directly to the fireplace, stirred up the red coals, and with a sort of impatience pitched the letters on them. As they blazed up high, she shook her clenched hand at them, saying fiercely:

“Yes; burn, you letters of a — California widow; the meanest thing living on earth. You talk beautifully of your love for him. Why were you not here to do what I have done? Watch by his sick-bed all through those dark, lonesome nights, without one to relieve or help me. Yes! and the lonely days, 244 too; for I have not seen the outside of this house for three long weeks.”

As she ran on, a maniac frenzy seemed rising in her face:

“Oh!” she cried, with an imploring voice, as she clasped both her hands above her head as high as she could reach, “why am I not some good, honest man's wife? I care not what his calling or occupation might be. I would love and honor him; I would go to the ends of the earth with him; I would never leave him for a week, but work, work and struggle and struggle for our mutual happiness as no woman ever did before. Oh! how happy that would make me. But *now*, but *now*,” she repeated, throwing herself into the rocking-chair, while she covered her eyes again with both hands with a grasp so tight that it appeared as if she was trying, by main force, to forever shut out the sight of some terribly hideous object. “Oh!” she half groaned the words aloud, “do what I will, I cannot shut out the vision of my dark life, and I am compelled to go *on, on*; for society,” here her voice was filled with bitter sarcasm, “*Christian* society, they call it, allows the erring woman no returning path; but they are liars,” she said, with energy, “when they say *Christian* society, for did not the Savior of the world forgive Magdalen? Yet there is none who will reach out a hand and

show me a returning road; so *on, on I must go*.” Suddenly removing her hands from her eyes, she sprang wildly to her feet, exclaiming, as she looked all around her: “Who spoke? Whose voice was that I heard?” Then, seeming to recollect herself, she sank back into the chair and continued, in a subdued voice, while she broke into sobs and weeping: “Oh, I know who it was that called me, his voice is ever coming back to me; it was my poor brother Thomas, who came all the way from Boston to find me, and persuade me to return with him, and who was shot dead by that ruffian, Red Dick, at ‘Hang Town,’ just because he saw him seated near me and supposed him to be his rival. Well, the miners hung Dick before my face while my brother's body was yet warm. The whole thing cost me a terrible fit of sickness, and now whenever I get one of those fits I hear Tom, oh, so plainly, calling, calling me to come home. Home!” said she, again growing wild, and springing to her feet. “Who talks of home? I have no home! I say I have no home!” she repeated, stamping her foot and shaking her clenched hand as if in fierce contradiction to some one.

245

Just as she made this exclamation, the door leading to the stairway opened, and a colored man, with a bundle of clothes carefully held in his hands, appeared. This was “Black Bob,” a man well known at that time in S—, whose wife was the best washerwoman in all that town. Bob was remarkably intelligent, industrious and well liked by all who had occasion for his services. He had been acquainted with Susan Marsh, and knew her history, and was now bringing the washed clothes necessary for Frank's room, and also Susan's own. As he entered, she sprang toward him, holding her hand up as if she would strike him, almost screaming out:

“I say, did you say I had a home, when you knew it was false?”

“Oh, Missa Susan, do not take on so, for the Lord's love,” said Bob, in a coaxing tone; but, not heeding him, she ran on, hissing the words through her half-closed teeth into his face: “You know I have no home. You know that I am a miserable outcast—despised, insulted and hooted at by the very men that made me what I am.”

Bob tried to soothe her by some kind words, while he hurriedly laid the returned washing on the little table near him, when suddenly Susan's eye caught the sight of a folded dress that Bob had carefully laid alongside the clothes.

“What is this you have brought me?” she exclaimed, in a frenzy of passion, as she darted toward and seized the garment.

“Oh, Missa Susan, that is the beautiful dress you left with Mrs. Weaks, the dressmaker, to be altered for you, and she gave it to me to bring to you. Oh, do not spoil it.”

As Susan now shook it out to its full length, nothing could exceed its beauty and richness. Its cost was evidently up in the hundreds. The sight of it seemed to frenzy the girl beyond all control. She tried to tear it into pieces, and, failing in strength to do that, she cast it on the floor and danced on it, all the time uttering imprecations on the person who had given it to her, whoever he was. Then, snatching it up, she cast it into the fire, exclaiming, while stirring it up with the poker:

“Yes; burn, *burn!* I wish I had him here to burn with his miserable gift.”

As the last shred of the beautiful garment turned into a gauzy cinder, she sank back into the rocking-chair, apparently almost 246 in a swoon—her head, with eyes closed, resting sideways on the back of the chair, while her arms fell listlessly by her side.

Bob stood a little way off, watching her closely. “Ah,” said he to himself, as he quitted the rooms, “the fit is now over. I have often seen such with these poor creatures, but that is one of the worst I ever saw. Oh, poor thing, you have a ‘home,’ and it is nearer to you, I am thinking, than you look for, and it is just six feet long and two feet wide. Poor, poor creature!”

After some minutes, Susan seemed to awake, as from a sleep. She opened her eyes, yawned, sat upright, pressed one hand over her forehead, and gazed thoughtfully a moment into the fire. Then said, in a quiet, calm voice:

“I believe I have been making a fool of myself, but the vile fit is over. I must now prepare myself, for he will soon be awake, and I must be ready to attend to him.”

As she spoke, she walked over to her wash-stand and bathed her face and nearly her whole head for some minutes in cold water.

“Now, I feel like myself again,” she exclaimed, while she commenced to dress herself with the utmost care, taking far more pains than she had any day since she had become Frank's nurse. She looked in the glass, and was evidently pleased with herself; and, in fact, she did look very handsome, as she had dressed herself with the most becoming simplicity. Nor had she much resemblance to the wild, crazy girl of a few minutes before.

“How do you like that, Mrs. Ellen Harvey?” she said, as she smiled in the glass. “He is your husband, and you love him, you say. Well, so do I, and have *I*, who saved his life, no rights? We shall see; yes, we shall see, Mrs. Ellen Harvey. But know this, I am determined he shall not escape me; I shall stop at no artifice to win him and overcome his scruples. Sighs, tears and smiles shall all come in just in the right places.” And then she added, while laughing almost aloud: “Yes; and then the devil himself will help me, for it is his work I am going to be about. Your letters, too, Mrs. Ellen Harvey, will give me some help, some idea of his character, without which, perhaps, I should fail. Yes, Mrs. Ellen Harvey; before two months are over I will be the ‘California Mrs. Harvey,’ and then I will keep you quiet by getting him to send you plenty of gold. That is all you California widows want. You see I know your 247 class,” she said, again laughing. “When I will appear by his side as his California Mrs. Harvey, he will be no worse than so many others who do the same and show no shame.”

Just then Frank awoke and called for a drink. Susan gave it to him, with the gentlest and most winning manners. He looked bewildered at her for some minutes, and, then, closing his eyes, he was fast asleep again. From this day forward Frank's recovery was rapid. The doctor explained to him that Susan was his nurse, and was high in his praises of her, telling Frank that to her he owed his life more than to himself. Frank, though very grateful, of course, to Susan Marsh, saw the

impropriety of her remaining longer with him; but, feeling secure under the shield of his devoted love for his wife, allowed himself to be over-persuaded both by the girl herself and the doctor. Frank's letter to Ellen will explain what followed. His appearance in San Francisco, sunk to the earth with sorrow, his sending me to S— to dismiss the girl Marsh from his house, and his writing home to Ellen to come to California. He found an escort for her in a friend of his, a Mr. Dicks, who was returning to Philadelphia for his own wife. With bounding joy, Ellen responded to the summons, and she is now in the steamer cabin in San Francisco waiting for Frank's arrival from S—.

CHAPTER VI.

MRS. GABIT—THE WIFE's ANGUISH.

After lunch, on the day of Ellen's arrival in San Francisco, I felt in fine spirits, and even Ellen appeared most happy. Recollecting some business requiring my attention, I excused myself to her, saying I would be back at five o'clock, and stay until Frank came. It appears I was not long gone when Ellen was surprised by a call from a Mrs. Gabit, a lady with whom she had a very slight acquaintance in Philadelphia. This Mrs. Gabit had come out to her husband about six months before, and was living with him now in San Francisco. She was rather good-looking and stylish in her appearance, but was a talkative and silly woman. On seeing Ellen, she came forward in the most friendly and familiar way, as though they had been dear old friends all their lives, and said: "Oh! dear Mrs. Harvey, I am *so glad* you have come. I declare you do look so beautiful! As handsome as I ever saw you. Oh, yes; you did right to come. *I am so glad* you have come. *I assure* you I am *very glad* you came. In fact, it was your *duty* to have come."

She said this last with a meaning look. Ellen was at first only disgusted at her uninvited familiarity, but now she began to look at her with half-puzzled astonishment.

"Thank you, Mrs. Gabit, for your being so *very* glad that I came. Of course, it was my duty, as you say, to have come when my husband sent for me."

“Oh; *he did send* for you, then. I told Mr. Gabit so, or that you never would have come. Yes; you did the best in coming, and I am so glad.”

“Really, Mrs. Gabit,” said Ellen, in a haughty, but yet moderate tone, “I do not understand you, or why *you* should express yourself *so very glad* at my coming.”

“Oh, well! dear Mrs. Harvey, I only speak for your own good. Men in California, you know, are not to be trusted when their wives are away. I know that from my own sad experience.”

249

Ellen now rose to her feet and full height, and, with her bright eyes flashing almost fire, while her voice was steady and full of scorn in its tone, said: “Madam, if you come here to intimate anything against the honor of my husband, I will tell you that your insolence is only surpassed by the falsehood of the insinuation you wish to throw out, and that your further presence is most disagreeable to me.”

“Oh, ho! you are assuming great airs about *your* husband, Mrs. Harvey,” said Mrs. Gabit, also rising to her feet. “Well, I will just tell you, that he is no better than mine and other women's husbands here in California.”

“Leave my presence, wretched woman!” said Ellen, in a voice of fierce command, as she stepped one step forward and stamped her slender foot on the cabin floor.

“Yes; I will go, Mrs. Harvey, but first I will just tell you that you are making a fool of yourself for nothing, for your husband did live with a woman in S— as his wife. My husband knows all about it. When I came here I did not intend to tell you, but you made me do so by your passions. So now make the most of it.”

As she said the last words, she was standing on the cabin stairway, and in a moment was out of sight. At first, Ellen remained fixed to the spot where she stood, as if bound by a spell; then both her hands with a sudden nervous movement clasped her forehead, as if she sought to steady her brain.

Katie, who had been present and had heard with terror all that had been said, now sprang to Ellen's side, and, throwing her arms around her, exclaimed:

“Oh, dear Mrs. Harvey, it is all false; I know it is false. She is only trying to make every one's husband as bad as her own. You will see it is all false. Come, come,” continued Katie, “sit down here near me. You must not mind the horrid woman. I know it is false. Think of how good Mr. Frank always was. He would not think a wrong act, let alone do one.”

Ellen did as Katie asked her; she sat by her on the sofa and leaned her head on her shoulder. She was as pale as death, and trembled from head to foot. Katie continued to talk of the absurdity of all Mrs. Gabit had said.

“You are right, dear Katie,” said Ellen, at length. “I know it must be that it is, as you say, all false; but the woman has frightened me terribly. Oh, how shall I hold out until he 250 comes, or, oh, Katie, how will I meet him and be in any doubt? For,” she continued in a low, half-choked, hesitating whisper, “if it *were* true, I could not even touch him ever again.”

As she uttered the last words, she started to her feet, and, grasping Katie by the hand said, wildly: “Katie, I say I know it is false. You said you knew it was false. Oh, Katie! say so again, or I cannot wait for him to come.”

Katie was terribly frightened, and again threw her arms around the form of the agitated girl, and, drawing her close to her bosom, she exclaimed:

“Oh! my dear, dear Miss Nellie, for the love of Heaven be calm, and do not give way in this frightful manner.”

It was a long time since Ellen had heard that old familiar address, which Katie had used in her fright, —“Miss Nellie.” It seemed to Ellen, somehow, as if it was a messenger from the past—the happy past—to assure her of Frank's innocence, and, yielding to the sweet thought, she threw herself back on the sofa, and, leaning forward, with her handkerchief over her face, found relief in a

flood of tears. In a little time she became calm, and apparently lost in thought; then said, half aloud, as if talking to herself:

“I must know before he comes.”

She rose, and with composed step and manner, walked to her writing desk, sat down and wrote the following note:

My dear husband, how shall I dare write what I sit down to write? Yet, I must do it. The horrid woman, Mrs. Gabit, has just been here. She insulted me in the grossest manner by insulting you, ever and ever loved darling husband. Before I could drive her from the steamer cabin, which I was trying to do, she boldly slandered you, by saying—forgive me, darling husband for writing it—that you lived with a woman in S., as your wife. I know my husband, that there cannot be even a shadow of foundation for the terrible falsehood, and now that I have told it to you, just throw this note in the fire and come to your wife. Never mention this note or the slanderous statements, or the woman Gabit. I do not want you to demean yourself by any contradiction. All I want for a contradiction is your coming to me, your silence on the subject, and your opening your arms for me to fly to. This will be all the denial I ask for or wish for. But, Frank! Oh, my God! if the horrid creature should have told truth, *never, never!* let us meet again in this world. One sight of you, in that case would kill me where I stood. But, why does my pen write such horrid language? I hate it for doing so, when I am so sure the woman spoke a malicious falsehood. Come, come to me, Frank, as I have told you, and let me find rest and calm within your folded arms, for your wife is frightened within in her heart. You will find me just as you left me, your faithful, loving and devoted wife.

ELLEN HARVEY.

251

When she had finished the note, she folded it with sudden haste, as if she wished to get it out of sight; put it in an envelope, and addressed it, “Frank Harvey, Esq., present.” She then handed it to Katie in the same hurried manner, and told her to give it to me on my return, and request me to meet Frank on board the river-boat, and deliver it to him, and to say to me, or any one who asked

for her, that she was not well, and was resting in her stateroom. I was surprised when Katie gave me this message and the note, but did not, just then, attach much importance to it, so I told Katie to say to cousin Ellen, that I would be back at half-past nine o'clock with Frank. Just as I was leaving the cabin, Katie whispered to me, "Wait on deck until I come." I did so, and when she came she told me all that had passed between Ellen and Mrs. Gabit. While Katie spoke, she cried and sobbed bitterly, and I found my own eyes were not dry. "But," said Katie, hesitatingly, and looking at me imploringly, "If it is a lie, all will be as well as ever." I turned my head away from her, and made no answer to her questioning voice.

"Oh! merciful *God*, it is then true," exclaimed Katie.

With all the voice I could command, I said: "Not as bad, Katie, as that wretch of a woman said, for it was only for a week, and then there were extenuating circumstances, but I fear Cousin Ellen will never see any to excuse, and will be unable to forgive. Heaven and earth!" I ran on in excitement, "I do not wish that woman Gabit harm, but would it not have been most delightful if she had broken her neck, as she was coming on board the steamer?"

"It would, indeed," sobbed poor Katie, with hearty emphasis; "though, of course, I know it is not right to wish any one harm, but I cannot help feeling as you do, Mr. Philips."

The river-boat came in at its usual time, and I met Frank as he stepped on the wharf. As I shook hands, I said: "The steamer is in, and Ellen is here."

"Thank God! she is safe. Is she perfectly well?" said Frank, taking my arm, and walking on with me in the direction of my store in Sansome street.

"Perfectly; and looks more beautiful than ever."

We spoke no more until we were alone in my back office. Throwing himself in a chair, Frank said:

"Henry, before I see her, she must know all."

“I supposed that would be your course,” said I, handing 252 him Ellen's note, and relating to him what had taken place between her and Mrs. Gabit. While I did so, he buried his face in his hands, and seemed bowed down with overpowering grief. Then overcoming himself, he wiped away all signs of his weakness, saying:

“Forgive me, Henry; you shall see no more of this. I have a man's work before me, and I will meet it like a man.”

He then read Ellen's note with comparative composure, saying, as he handed it back to me to read:

“Noble girl! it is my inevitable sentence, but it is only what I told you I had to expect. Her angelic purity of feeling will be shocked beyond recovery.”

I read the note, and then asked him what was to be done, and went on to tell him that I had done as he directed, and engaged rooms at the Union Hotel. This was, by far, the finest hotel then in San Francisco. It stood at the corner of Kearny and Merchant streets, opposite the Plaza. After a pause, Frank said:

“To you, Henry, I must now leave all. Tell me what you advise.”

I then told him to write a short note to Ellen, just to request her to go with me and take possession of her rooms at the Union, until she was calm enough to hear what he had to say in his defence.

He wrote as I advised, and I left him in wretchedness, walking up and down my office, while I went on my sad and most painful mission, to take part in and witness a scene which it is even now terrible for me to recall.

As the hour came for my return to Ellen with Frank, who can paint the misery of her feelings! To her, more than life a hundred times hung upon the response to her note. Minutes were hours to her now—an hour was a year. She could not sit nor stand, nor stay in any one position. She knelt to pray with Katie, but with every footstep on the deck her heart would leap to her throat and almost

suffocate her. Oh! who has ever stood waiting for news that was to be to them tidings of great joy or of deep sorrow, and not sickened and grew faint at the delay! At length she heard my step and knew it well, but it was not the step her heart was listening for. Pale and trembling, she started to her feet, and advanced to the middle of the cabin. As I appeared, she said at once:

253

“Frank! He has not come? The boat is not in yet, perhaps?”

Confused and hardly knowing what to do or say, I mechanically reached her Frank's note. In an instant she sprang forward, and, without taking the note, seized me by the collar with both hands; then looking me full in the face, with intense earnestness, she cried out, almost in a scream:

“Henry Philips, is Frank Harvey, my husband, in San Francisco, and did he get my note?”

All I could answer was the terrible word: “Yes.”

Her hold on me relaxed, and leaning forward, with her hands tightly clasped before her, she continued for a moment longer to gaze in my face, as if, with a desperate effort, to find in its expression some ray of hope for her. Then an indescribable expression of pain passed over her features. Hope, that sunlight of the human countenance in the darkest and dreariest hours, seemed gone from hers in an instant, and forever; and, as the dark shades of despair replaced it, she uttered a piercing cry, and fell to the cabin floor as lifeless as if death had come in reality to end her suffering. It was but the work of an instant to carry her to the sofa. There, with Katie's active aid, we did all that was possible to restore her to consciousness.

The Captain, who had just returned on board, hearing the loud cry, came quickly to the cabin. I took him aside, and explained matters as far as I thought necessary. He appeared deeply affected, and expressed the greatest sympathy. After awhile our efforts to restore Ellen were successful, and she now sat up on the sofa, and, looking all around her, seemed unable to ascertain where she was; then, pressing her hand on her forehead and bending her eyes downward for a moment, as if in an effort to collect her thoughts, she suddenly started erect and exclaimed:

“Henry! Katie! and the Captain! all here! Where is the matter? And where is Frank? Oh, Henry, tell me, tell me truly, what all this means? Have I lost my senses, or did that horrid woman really come here and tell me a detestable tale that is true?” As she spoke, a shudder seemed to pass through her frame.

“Oh, dear cousin Ellen, be calm; be yourself. You know you always told me I was your brother, and *God* knows I loved you as dearly as ever brother loved a sister. Things are not as bad 254 as that woman told you. It is true, I cannot altogether clear Frank, but he is not deliberately guilty. He fell, but he recovered himself almost immediately, and is now deeply penitent.”

While I spoke, Ellen's eyes were fixed on me. At the word penitent, she drew herself up to her proudest bearing. Rising to her feet, her eyes flashed almost flaming light, and, advancing a step or two, with her little hand clenched menacingly, she broke in:

“Penitent! Who dares to talk of my husband being *penitent Penitent*?” she repeated, with a loud laugh of scorn that it was terrible to hear. “Penitent for what? My husband, proud of his religion, proud of his honor, proud of the honor of his wife, mother and father, and of that of his whole race, now sinks to humility and *penitence* by a crime against the holy vow, made on bended knees before an altar he held sacred. No! no! It is impossible! I tell you, Henry Philips, you are mistaken. I know you are mistaken. This *penitent* man you speak of is not *my husband*; the Frank Harvey that I loved as woman never loved before, and in whose fidelity and truth I trusted with that faith and confidence that tolerates no apprehension or doubting. I want no *penitent* husband. I came here to meet the husband that, himself, from my childhood up, taught me to abhor falsehood and infidelity, as belonging solely to the infernal regions, and to love truth, purity and fidelity as heaven's choicest gifts and graces, and without which no man could be noble, honorable or great. Oh, tell me,” she continued, clasping her temples with her hands, “where that husband is? *My* husband? And let me fly to him to save, oh save, this aching brain.” And again she threw herself on the sofa, with her face buried in her hands.

It was impossible to hear her and witness her great suffering and control one's feelings, try ever so much.

Katie sobbed as if her heart would break, and I did not act much better myself.

The Captain sought to hide what he could not conceal, and left the cabin. I had a duty to perform, so I struggled for composure. It was to do my best both for Ellen and for Frank that the circumstances would permit; so, summoning all my resolution, I took my seat on the sofa, and, taking Ellen's hand gently, I said:

255

“Darling Nellie, listen to me, your own loved brother.”

Before I could proceed she started erect in her seat and exclaimed:

“Who called me ‘darling Nellie’? Why! that is the name *he* used to call me when I believed there was love and truth in his words, love and truth in all the world over wherever he and I stood together side by side. Yes; that is what he used to call me in those days when music was no music to my ear if he was not there to hear it; when sounds of mirth and laughter were meaningless to me if his voice was not mingled with it; when the brightest sunshine was gloom itself if he was not with me to enjoy it. But,” she continued, “the illusion is past forever. The world looks one dark valley in which there is no love, no truth, no virtue nor honor; nothing but crime, treachery and deceit; and in which there is nothing left to make it endurable to live in. So, never let me hear that name he used to call me, and which was so dear to me before I awoke from my foolish dream of wordly happiness, into which it helped to cheat me.”

Then changing her manner to a painful calmness, she turned towards me, and, with an unnatural air of self-possession, continued:

“Now, Cousin Henry, what do you want me to do? I will hear you through, although my mind is made up.”

Shocked as I was at the evidently unsettled state of her mind, I saw the great necessity of her leaving the steamer at once. I did not again present Frank's note, but told her of the rooms at the Union Hotel, where she would be wholly undisturbed, and alone with Katie, and used every argument in my power to induce her to go at once, and take possession of them. It was all of no avail. She declared her intention of remaining on board until the return steamer for Panama should be ready to receive passengers. Then she would take her passage and return to Philadelphia. Finding it impossible to move her resolution, I left her for the night with Katie, and returned to Frank. He insisted on my repeating every word she uttered, and for a description of the whole scene, although its relation cost him the bitterest agony, and sometimes almost cries of anguish. After he became more calm, I told him that Ellen had demanded the necessary funds to make all her arrangements for a return voyage. We then settled that I should again see her in the morning, and agree to her return, provided, she at once 256 went to her rooms at the Union, and that I should promise to find some suitable escort, and a servant instead of Katie, whose engagement of marriage would, of course, prevent her return. I told Frank that if we succeeded in getting her to the Union, I was not without hope. She might be induced to change her mind. Frank looked at me with a sad, helpless smile, and said:

“Never! You do not half know her, Henry, if you have any such idea. However, hopeless as I know and feel the effort will be, yet I am compelled by feelings I cannot, even if I would, control to make this effort, and leave nothing undone to bring to it success. Oh, my God!” he continued, “what will become of me if she leaves without seeing or forgiving me. I am, as she says, humbled to the dust, and, I trust in God, truly penitent, also. Henry,” he went on in a low, subdued voice, “I want you to do all you can for me, for I believe even life hangs on the result of your efforts.”

By half-past 8 in the morning I was again with poor Ellen. I found her in that same cold, calm, unnatural mood in which I had left her the night previous.

Katie, who met me on the deck, told me she had neither wept nor slept all night, nor had she tasted food, nor had she alluded, she said, to her troubles in any way, except to speak once or twice of her immediate return to Philadelphia as a settled thing.

“Oh!” said Katie, “if she would only cry and talk of her troubles; but not a tear has she shed since you came back last night without Mr. Harvey. Something must be done to bring her back, for I know she cannot go on in this way.”

I was much of Katie's opinion, and felt greatly alarmed at this state of Ellen's mind. I had hardly taken my seat by her when she demanded what I came for, and if I had brought the funds she asked for with me. She sat near the table, with one arm resting on it, with which she supported her head, while her large eyes were fixed on my face with a half-vacant gaze. I evaded her question, and went on to talk of such things as I thought might touch her feelings. Finding that nothing I had said moved her in the least, I went on to try the effect of talking directly of Frank. I told her of the deception used by the doctor who attended him in his sickness, in the matter of the nurse, while Frank was unable to act for himself, and began a statement of the case, as I understood it.

257

While I spoke I could not see the least change in her expression of countenance, but once I thought her lip slightly curled, as if in contempt, when I was speaking of the artfulness of the nurse; but, if this was so, it passed off in a moment. I then went on to conclude by saying:

“Now, Frank says if you cannot bring yourself to see him, all he asks is that you will go with me to the Union, and, when there, read over his written statement of all that has passed, and then if, at the end of the twelve days that are to intervene between this and the departure of the next steamer, you still wish to return, he will provide you with a good escort, a good female attendant, and, of course, all the funds you want or ask for. Do not refuse him, Ellen, I implore you, because Frank feels that if this separation does take place it will be for all this life, and he demands, as a right, that you hear his statement before you take the final step; and if you adopt this course, he is sure that, if you cannot overlook the past and stay, you will at least pity and forgive him.”

From her countenance I could hardly judge whether she heard or understood a word I had said. But when I had stopped speaking, without moving her position, she said, in a contemptuous tone, and with a bitter half-smile on her lip:

“Go back, Cousin Henry, and tell that person who sent you here that I do not even know who he is. *He* is not *my* husband, I *know*, for *my* husband never *could* have had an occasion to ask *any one* to forgive or *pity* him; and if that woman Gabit's story of *my* husband was true, he would despise me if it was possible for me to stay and overlook the past, as you talk about. No!” she continued, with high animation; “in that case, Frank Harvey would know that there was a horrible gulf opened between us, at our very feet, that never could be passed in this world, and he would despise the wife of his that would attempt to pass it. No, Henry; you see you cannot deceive me. I want no favors from any one. I will make my own arrangements, and one is never to step on California soil. Good-by, Henry,” she continued, rising from her seat. “If we meet again, let it be at our old home in Philadelphia.”

As she said this and left the cabin, there was inexpressible sadness and woe in her face.

Sick at heart, I remained for a moment in my seat, at a loss how to manage or what to do.

258

Katie just then came in, and it occurred to me to have her try what she could do. I told her the first great object was to get Mrs. Harvey to leave the steamer, and that she must put her wits to work to make her go to the Union Hotel. She promised to do her best; so I returned to my office, where I found waiting for Frank a friend of his from S—, a Mr. Leet, to whom he had confided his present troubles. He was Frank's sincere friend, and sympathized, I have no doubt, sincerely with him in all this matter. Mr. Leet was rich, and, as the world goes, a very good sort of a man. Nevertheless; his notions on morality were of that low cast so terribly universal nowadays. He saw no sense in Frank's ideas on the subject, and much less in Ellen's. He thought the “game,” as he expressed it to me, was all in Frank's own hands.

“When he received that note from his wife,” said he, “telling him to come to her if Mrs. Gabit's story was false, and that she would never say another word about it, he should have gone, and, after a week or so, told her the truth, for fear any busy-body would do so. She could not then back out on any such silly pretence as she is now setting up.”

It was as much as I could do to restrain my indignation at hearing my loved cousin's conduct commented on or questioned by a man who could neither appreciate nor comprehend a character like hers. However, I acted with Mr. Leet as I do with all men whose ideas on morality are squared by the same low standard that I knew his to be—I neither argued nor found fault with him. I knew, too, that it was not from any disrespect to his friend's wife that he spoke as he did. I therefore merely said that it would be well not to make such a remark as that to Frank.

“Oh, no,” said he; “it is too late now. He held the four aces, but had not the courage to play them boldly, and lost his advantage, so that the game is up, and I will not pain my friend Frank by finding any fault with him.”

Just then Frank joined us, and I gave the result of my visit to Ellen; and then we began to discuss what had best be done, when I was called by one of my clerks to say that Katie was in my store and wished to speak to me. We at once admitted her to our council. She told us that, after I had left the steamer, Ellen had become very much excited, and would listen to nothing from her. That, after awhile, the Captain coming in, Ellen 259 appealed to him, that in case her cousin and husband refused her the necessary means of carrying out her design of at once returning home, if he would not accept her own draft on her uncle's house in Philadelphia for her passage, and permit her to remain where she was until the steamer was ready to receive passengers. Katie understood the Captain to consent, and thought it best to let me know.

As Katie made this announcement, Frank sprang to his feet, and, confronting her, said, almost fiercely: “Consented to have her stay on board the steamer, and accept her own draft, did you say? Are you sure you heard this?”

Katie became very pale, but said: "Yes, sir; I think that was what I heard."

"Great God! What does this mean?" said Frank, as he turned from Katie, with increased agitation.

Since Katie's entrance, Leet was standing, smoking a cigar, with his back to the stove, one foot on his chair, his right elbow resting on his knee, while he supported his chin with his forefinger and thumb. To Frank's impassioned question he slowly said:

"It explains matters to me, I think, so that I can understand them *now*; which, I confess, I never did before. The *Captain* wants her to stay, and *she* is willing to stay. I see, I *see*."

Leet, in his bent-over position, did not see what I saw; that Frank was advancing towards him, with his eyes flashing and every feature of his face rigid and pale with sudden passion. Leet had hardly uttered the last words, "I see," when a well-directed blow from Frank's right arm felled him to the floor; Frank exclaiming, as he bounded on his fallen friend with the fury of a madman: "Die, villain! die! You have dared to insinuate a foul slander against an angel of purity, my injured wife."

The noise and Katie's screams brought all my astonished employees to the office; so that Leet was soon rescued from Frank's maddened clutch. His rescuers took him away, while I detained Frank by force in the office. I could not find it in my heart to be sorry for what had befallen poor Leet, and if Frank had not been there, I would not have let the language pass; at the same time, I felt well assured that Leet meant no offence. For some minutes after we were alone again, Frank continued to stride up and down the office. At length, he asked me for 260 pen and paper, sat down and wrote a note, which he addressed to the Captain. He told me that it was a challenge, and asked me if I would take it as his friend. I peremptorily refused, and did all I could to dissuade him from such a step: First, because I despised the whole code of dueling, and I knew Frank did also; and secondly, because I was sure the Captain, whom I knew to be a man of unblemished honor, could explain his conduct in the matter to our entire satisfaction.

Frank, however, was not himself. He was in a wild excitement, and would listen to no arguments on the subject. When he found he could not move me, he left the office, and soon found a business friend, who took the challenge for him.

The Captain was surprised and pained on receiving Frank's hostile note. He told the bearer to go back to Mr. Harvey, and tell him that he was always ready to defend his honor, and to give honorable satisfaction to all men to whom he had given just cause to demand it; but that, in this case, nothing on earth would induce him to meet Frank Harvey. "First," said he, "because I have given Mr. Harvey no cause of offence, as I can show by the explanation I will give of what has passed between Mrs. Harvey and myself; and secondly, because, if I meet Mr. Harvey, it might, if that were possible, cast a shade on the unsullied purity of his wife. For these reasons I positively decline, let the results to me be what they may. Please say further that I shall at once call on my friend, Mr. Philips, as I acknowledge an explanation is necessary."

After sending this message to Frank, the Captain came directly to my office. He explained that, upon returning to the steamer soon after I had left, he found Mrs. Harvey in a state of the wildest excitement. That she had made what, of course, he considered an absurd demand on him. It was the same Katie had told us of. He said he acquiesced, without question or argument, in all she said, fearing that, in her excitement, she would do herself some harm if refused or denied anything; that he was on the point of coming to my office himself to tell us of what had passed, when he was unexpectedly detained by business until he got Frank's hostile note. If Frank and myself had been his brothers, and Ellen his daughter, he could not have shown more generous feeling and deep sympathy for us all than he did.

Soon afterwards, when I made the explanation to Frank, his 261 generous nature heartily regretted his hasty action, and he took an opportunity of making an ample apology to the Captain. The Captain met him in a manly, frank spirit, and accepted the apology most graciously, telling him that he honored the feeling that led him into the mistake.

As soon as the Captain left my office, I made up my mind to see Katie, and get her to tell Ellen the whole scene with Mr. Leet, which she had witnessed in my office; also, that Frank had challenged the Captain; and to urge her to at once leave the steamer to save further disturbance, and, perhaps, bloodshed, and the scandalous talk of the idle and worthless.

CHAPTER VII.

ELLEN AND THE REV. FATHER.

Katie, comprehending my idea perfectly, without loss of time, sought Ellen, and found her in her state-room, seated near her berth, with both her arms thrown out before her on the pillow, and her head resting between them. Katie commenced:

“Oh, dear, dear, Mrs. Harvey, we must leave this steamer at once. Such terrible things as have happened to-day, all because we remain here.”

Ellen did not speak or change her position, but, turning her head, looked at Katie, as a person does who is half awake, and trying to collect their thoughts so as to enable them to comprehend what is said.

Katie continued, and told all that had happened, and concluded by saying: “And Mr. Harvey has challenged the Captain to fight him.”

“Who to fight?” exclaimed Ellen, starting from her reclining position, and from half lethargy to wild life. “Who did you say was to fight?”

Katie repeated what she had told of the challenge.

“Frank to fight! No! no! he *shall* not fight. It is some plan to murder him. I say he *shall not* fight! Go, Katie, fly, fly to Cousin Henry, and tell him to prevent this terrible fight, and I will do anything

he asks of me, *but* to meet him. Oh, God! I mean my husband; I cannot meet him. Henry must not ask me that. But go and say that *anything* else under heaven he asks, I will freely do.”

Then, while she walked the state-room floor with excited, feverish steps, she exclaimed, aloud:

“Oh, father dear, I was your pet and darling! Oh, mother, sweet mother, I was your pride and comfort! You left me long, long ago, a little child, to loving friends, and, you thought, to happiness; but, oh! how much better for me had I been taken with you. I would now be lying in a quiet little grave, between 263 you, safe from all this trouble and strife, hid away in the long Winters by the pure, white snow, and in the bright Summers by tall grass and wild flowers, through which every breeze from my own native hills would murmur sad songs for my rest. Oh! had it been so, I never would have known of the falsehood and deception of the world.”

Then, turning to Katie, she continued: “Fly, Katie, fly, or my senses will leave me.”

Katie needed no urging to come with speed to me, nor I to return with her to poor Ellen. I put her mind to rest with regard to the duel, and she made no further objections to go with me to her rooms in the Union. I promised to find the escort, and have all in readiness for her return home, as she desired. I then communicated all that had taken place to Frank. The result was a great consolation and relief to him. The next day, when I called at the Union, I found, from Katie's report, that Ellen remained in the same unnatural, listless state. She made no complaints; she took no notice of anything around her.

When asleep, she seemed half awake; when awake she appeared half asleep.

“But, worst of all,” said Katie, “she will not now say any prayers, although all her life she has been so religious and devout. This morning I knelt near her to see if she would join me, and when I saw she took no notice of me as she walked by me, I began to cry; I could not help it; and then she stopped and took her handkerchief, and, stooping over me, wiped away my tears, and whispered to me in, oh, such a sad, lonesome voice: ‘Poor Katie! you must not cry; there is nothing left in this world worth shedding tears for.’ Then she resumed her constant walk up and down the room. Oh!

Mr. Philips, it is terrible to see her so. If she would only cry, the tears would bring her to herself. I have been,” Katie continued, “to the Catholic Church in Vallejo street this morning, where I went to confession and communion, and, after mass, I thought it no harm to talk with the Priest, Father L— , as all the Catholics here say he is a perfect saint, about Mrs. Harvey; but when I told him that she had a husband and a cousin here, he said they were the proper persons to speak to him of private family matters, and that if they saw fit to do so, he would do all he could for them, but otherwise he could not interfere. So I thought I would tell you what he said.”

264

I saw Katie's idea, and thought it a good one, so I went in search of Frank. When I met him he told me he had just returned from the Vallejo street church, where he had had a long talk with the good Priest, Father L— , and that he had promised to be at my office in an hour, with a good old father who had just arrived from Oregon, and who was, he said, a man of fine judgment and great prudence. At the appointed time Father L— put in an appearance, accompanied by his friend from Oregon, Father D—. This Father D— was a tall, fine-looking man, well advanced in years. He was evidently a man of the highest education and refinement. His countenance beamed with benevolence, and he was affable and courteous in manners. His conversation was fascinating, and while it had something of the gentleness of a woman in it, yet it had all the strength, clearness and vigor of expression we claim as characteristic of our own sex. He was a Belgian by birth, and of a high and wealthy family in that country, and had served, when a youth, in an honorable capacity, near the person of the first Napoleon. He had of late been an associate of the famous Indian missionary, Father DeSmet, in the mountain districts of Oregon, and was, at this time, suffering from a wound he received there. He was on his way to join Father Nobli, at Santa Clara College, which has since become such a splendid educational institution. After a short acquaintance, we both felt that he was one on whose judgment we could rely without fear or question, and that if any one could move poor Ellen it would be this good father. He did not give Frank much hope of any immediate reunion. He said he thought he comprehended her character from all we had told him, and if he did, nothing but time and a deep, religious humility of feeling could ever overcome the shock her unbounded faith in her husband's honor and truth, and her sentiments of purity and

delicacy of thought, had received. That all things were possible to *God*, and that Frank must not despair, but look forward with hope, but with resignation, to the result of our efforts. It was then agreed that Father D— and I should call to see Ellen that afternoon at four o'clock, and that all we should ask of her was to read a letter from Frank, giving a truthful statement of his life in California, and which should make no demand for a reunion, or even an interview, between her and Frank. This being settled, I then prepared Katie for the visit, and she, as far as she could, prepared Ellen. She found it, however, impossible to fix Ellen's ideas, or be sure that she even heard what she said. When we arrived Katie showed us at once into Ellen's private parlor. As we entered, Ellen looked up from her half-reclining position on the sofa, and I, without ceremony, introduced the Rev. Father to her. For a moment her look was bent keenly on him, and then, with a visible start, she turned to me saying, in a careless tone:

“Henry, have you found the escort?”

I told her not, but would in ample time. Then the Father made efforts to draw her into conversation on indifferent subjects, but she seemed to avoid it; at the same time, however, she appeared to grow somewhat excited. At last, she addressed the Father directly herself, and said, with a smile and a tone in which there was evidently half contempt:

“I suppose you are the pastor of this place, brought here by my good cousin to influence my conduct and get me to *forgive* my *penitent* husband. Yes, oh yes; a very good business for the Catholic pastor of San Francisco to come on, to see if he can get the wife to overlook the falsehood and dishonor of the husband, for his crime is not worth speaking of. I suppose,” she continued, in a bitter, sarcastic tone, “it is only the breach of his marriage vows, made in the church, before the altar dedicated to the God he pretended to worship; *that is all*; and it was not his fault, of course, if that wife did not know that those vows, and all the religious ceremonies attending them, were but a mocking show, intended to deceive the foolishly confiding and ignorant. No; of course it is not his fault if that foolish wife believed in *God*, believed in those *vows* as a truth, believed in all that that husband told her, with a faith that never thought or *dreamed of a doubt*. No; of course it was not his fault, and you have come to tell me so. I knew your errand before you came, and I intended not to

utter a word in reply; but there is some mysterious connection between your voice and face—what it is I cannot imagine—with a terribly dark hour of my childhood, that I find compels me to speak; so I will spare you all the trouble of making an argument to me.”

She now seemed to give way completely to her heretofore half-suppressed excitement, and, rising from her seat, advanced a step or two towards the priest, while she continued, with the same sarcastic tone of voice and bitter smile: “You wish to tell me what I know now—that the religion you have all your 266 life been teaching is a *lie*. You want to say, also, that the idea that man is superior to the beasts of the field, is all nonsense; that, as I have made that discovery, I may as well conform myself to this true state of things, and do as others do, and not be a foolish, obstinate woman. There; I have made your argument; it is short, but it *means* all you wish to say to me, I am sure.”

As she ceased speaking, she threw herself back impatiently into her seat, and looked apparently for a reply. During all the time she had been addressing him, the Father continued to regard her with a look of mingled fear, sorrow and admiration; and, when she had ceased to speak, he remained silent, and I saw that a tear stole down his cheek.

Ellen waited a moment, and then said: “You came to talk with me, I know, and now you have nothing to say.”

“Dear lady,” said the Father, “you have misconstrued my visit altogether. Neither am I the pastor of San Francisco. No; for the last thirty years of my life I have been on a mission with the red children of the mountains and the wilderness, and have only now left them through necessity of health, and in obedience to the call of my superior. I have nothing to give, nor favor to ask from living man. The morning of my life dawned as fair and bright as your own, my dear lady, could possibly have been. My fortune was ample. The greatest Captain and monarch on the earth, of his time, was my friend; I had a loving father, and a dotingly fond mother, sisters and brothers, whose love was as pure and sincere as love on earth could be, and whose society was exquisitely delightful to me. But *God* was pleased to convince me that this world was not my true home, and to give me the grace to

yield up my earthly home, friends, fortune, ambition, and all that appeared to me at first so bright and dazzling in this life, that I might take up the cross and find *all*, and hundreds of times *more* than all, again, in that country where sin, disappointment and sorrow are unknown; and, dear lady, I tell you truly, that I would not now, as my weary journey draws to a close here, far away from all the friends I ever knew or loved in my childhood and boyhood, retrace the step I took, to be made the monarch of the earth, in the flush of my manhood. No, dear lady; I would not yield up the recollection of one year's labor with my red children of the Rocky Mountains for all the earth could bestow. Excuse me for saying so much of myself, but I did so because you appeared to misunderstand my visit, and to regard me unkindly. I came at the request of the good and pious Vicar-General of San Francisco, who is an old acquaintance of mine, and also at the request of your cousin, to whom he introduced me; but I assure you, dear lady, that I meant no intrusion that would pain you in your deep sorrow, but with a faint hope that I might do or say something that would soothe, relieve or console you. Again, excuse me," he concluded, as he arose and bowed his adieu.

In a moment, Ellen's whole manner changed. Her eyes and all her face lit up, as it were, with a light and glow. She clasped her hands in the attitude of supplication, and exclaimed:

"I did not mean to be unkind. Stay, oh, stay! A wild fancy, a dream it may be, comes to my mind." Laying her hand on the priest's arm, and pressing it so as to turn him directly towards her, and, looking earnestly in his face, she continued: "Oh! no; I cannot be mistaken. Tell me, oh! tell me, if, years and years ago, you were not in my native town of Lancaster, in Pennsylvania, to collect aid for your red men; and, if so, have you no recollection, while there, of a dark and stormy night, in which you were called to administer the last sacraments to a lady dying of cholera, whose husband had died the day previous?"

In astonishment, the priest replied:

"Perfectly; and the brave little girl, who, kneeling, held the hand of her dying parent, and joined in all the prayers for the departing soul. Where is she?"

“Aye; and do you recollect that the dying mother placed your hand on that little girl's head, and asked you to add your blessings to hers, and to pray with her that the child might go through the world safely and reach Heaven in the end, and that you knelt and said *that* prayer, while you laid both your hands on her head?”

“I do, perfectly; and that was the mother's exact prayer; I recollect all now; she asked NOTHING but safety for her child in this world; *all* for the *next*.”

“Now,” said Ellen, with a sort of triumphant look, “you, who had resigned your youth, fortune and all you held dear, and hid away your talents and education, without a murmur, among the wild savages, seeking nothing but *God*, prayed with fervent sincerity to *that God* for an orphan child, and to-day every 268 possibility of happiness in this world has vanished from her, and is gone forever. The next world is revealed to her a *blank*, and then say, if you can, that your prayers and my angel mother's dying supplications were heard, *for I am that child!*”

Here she paused for a moment, while she struggled with some deep emotion. When she continued, her excitement rose nearly to frenzy, and there was something in the tone of her sweet voice, in the wild expression of her face and in her extreme commanding personal beauty, as she stood confronting the old missionary, with her arms across her breast, that gave her almost a supernatural appearance, and filled me with awe. I turned to the old man with hope, yet with fear that it was beyond his or human power to allay such fearfully aroused feelings. But one look on him reassured me, for there was a calm light in his countenance and a confidence in his noble bearing, as he summoned all the energies of his soul to meet the evil spirit that seemed to fight for the possession of the beautiful being before him; for, as I looked on, I could not help feeling that the contest was between good and evil, and that the old man relied not on his own strength or ability, but on some higher power, that he knew or felt could not fail him.

“Now, good Father,” she exclaimed, “as the red men called you, and as we all called you, explain, if you can, why that child you prayed for should be led through a childhood and girlhood of unalloyed happiness, oh, so happy, that Heaven itself seemed scarce worth working for, for she seemed to

be in it here on earth; oh, so happy in being united with a partner whose purity, truth and honor were so acknowledged by all, so believed in by the fond, happy wife that she felt to ask *God*, as a doubting wife might do, to guard and keep him all that he was, would be a treason to the confidence she of right owed him; explain, if you can, I say, why all this joy should be given to that child you prayed for, apparently with no other object than when in the zenith of this great bliss to dash her to the earth, dragged down by him who, as boy or man, never harbored a dishonest thought, or uttered a word or committed an act that would tarnish the honor of a boy at sport, or of a man among men; no, no; you cannot explain all this, but I can do so. It is this: That God you served did not hear you, and, sad as the discovery will be to you, I will tell you that you have spent all your life's labors in pursuit of a *phantom*, and this truth you may as well know, 269 even if the discovery is made in the evening of your life. Know then," she continued, with uplifted hand, "that there is *no sin, no crime, no dishonor, no falsehood in this world; nor virtue, nor honor, nor goodness, nor truth, nor the hereafter they talk about. There is no Hell, no Heaven*, and I defy and deny the Being you call—"

"Hold, hold, my child," exclaimed the old man, with a commanding solemnity in his voice, while he raised his hands toward Heaven above her head. "Do not, I conjure you in the Savior's name, utter the terrible blasphemy."

Stopping the fearful sentence as the word "*God*" trembled unspoken on her lips, Ellen remained for a moment as if transfixed to the spot, with her gaze still wild and fixed on the missionary. Instantly he dropped on his knees, and, in tones of the deepest supplication, repeated the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, and then St. Bernard's prayer of "Remember," in which pious Catholics have such unbounded faith. Katie and I joined, without, I believe, our knowing that we did so. As the last words of the prayer passed the missionary's lips, Ellen uttered a low, sad cry that seemed to tell of unspeakable pain, and, falling upon her knees, with her face buried in her hands, gave way unrestrainedly to gushing tears and sobs. Blessed tears! They came to allay and still the wild storm that was beating around her heart, as often do the rains of heaven the most stormy seas, when hope has almost left the brave mariner's breast. The Father did not rise, but, with bowed down head, commenced to give out the litany of our Savior, Katie and myself making the responses. What a feeling of pleasure thrilled to my heart when I distinguished Ellen's sweet voice, interrupted

by choking sobs, also joining us. I felt that her reason, at least, which had seemed to totter on its throne, was safe. As we arose from our knees, Ellen wiped away her tears, and, extending her hand to the missionary, said, calmly:

“Rev. Father, I owe you much; much more than I can thank you for. Light has come when my mind was the darkest. And, as I look back, I see, clearly, how intolerable my pride must have been to the majesty of *God*. My dying mother's prayer, in which you joined, *was* heard, and you have been sent to save me. Oh, yes! there is a good, a merciful *God*. There is a heaven worth all, and a thousand times more than it can be given me to suffer in efforts to reach it.”

270

Then, clasping her hands and looking up, she continued:

“Oh, *God*, accept my humiliation and the suffering of all my future life, which I freely offer in atonement for my pride, but, oh, grant, in Thy goodness and mercy, that he and I, whose lives have been so entwined on earth, may yet, both together, worship Thee in heaven.”

Then, addressing the missionary, she said:

“What, Father, will you have me do to make a beginning?”

“Nothing, my child, *nothing*, but to calm yourself and return thanks to God, and to Him alone, for the mercy He has shown you this day, praying always for faith, strength and courage.”

Then he added, hesitatingly:

“I would also ask of you, as a great favor, when you can summon the courage to do so, to read this letter, addressed to you by your husband.”

Ellen started back as if in terror, a tremor shaking her whole frame.

“It is nothing, my child,” continued the missionary, “but a statement of facts that it is your duty, I think, to read, that you may not think worse of your husband than he deserves. Charity calls on you for the sacrifice, my child.”

“And I must not shrink from the first one of my new life, but may I not wait until I feel able?” said Ellen, in a voice that was almost inarticulate from emotion, while she reached her trembling hand for the letter.

“Certainly,” said the priest. “Take your own time and be calm. Farewell, my child; and may *God* bless and make you happy.”

As the missionary turned to leave, I reached my hand to Ellen. As she took it she looked in my face, saying:

“Poor Henry, you have been weeping for me, too. Dear brother, but for you, what would have become of me; kiss me, Henry, I feel so much, so much more happy.”

The Father took his way to Vallejo street, and, as he bid me “good-day,” I saw that he had to make a strong effort to suppress his emotion. I, full of thankfulness at the result of our mission, returned to my office. There I found Frank, looking pale and worn from intense thought and mental suffering. I would have avoided telling him more than the result of our visit.

“No, no, Henry,” said he; “you must not rob me of one word 271 she spoke nor one look of hers that you can find language to portray, for the very agony their recital brings to my heart is dear to me, because it makes me feel as though I was sharing in her sorrow.”

Finding, as before, that it was impossible to avoid it, I gave him the full details. When I mentioned Ellen's discovery, that the missionary was the priest who had attended my aunt, Mrs. Stewart, in her last sickness, Frank exclaimed: “Oh, God! Thy hand is visible.” This was his only interruption. He listened to all with that calm, suffering endurance which brave and noble hearts can alone command, until I told him of her parting words, and of her grateful, sisterly kiss. Then, as if that

had touched some new spring hid away in the recesses of his heart, and opened some fountain that it was impossible even for heroism itself to hold back or stem, he threw his arms around my neck, and, resting his head on my bosom, gave way, without control to deep, convulsive grief, like that which comes to an innocent child in real sorrow. For a moment we were both children again—away, far away in the past—but, soon recovering ourselves, we were once more ready and willing to combat, as men, the realities of life.

Katie told me, the next day, that after the good Father and myself had left, Ellen called her and told her that she would like to go with her to church in the morning to early service. She then spent some hours before retiring in religious preparation.

In the morning Katie wished to order a carriage, but Ellen would not allow it, as she was anxious for a walk. So, wrapping warmly, at the dawn of the morning they were both on their way to St. Francis' Church, on Vallejo street. They reached it on time, and it was yet hardly light. There were, perhaps, some fifty persons in the church, all kneeling, and apparently wrapped in devotion. Near the altar there were two priests kneeling, with cloaks wrapped around them. Simple and plain as the Church of St. Francis then was, there was in this scene, at that dawning hour of the morning, something that brought to Ellen's sad heart a sweet and soothing consolation; and she seemed to gather strength for her forward march through life, which looked to her, just then, so rugged and difficult to tread. They recognized the old missionary as one of the priests near the altar, and, at Ellen's wish, Katie stole up to him and requested him to go into the confessional. He did so, and gave Ellen the opportunity she sought of obtaining his counsel and of making the necessary preparations for the approaching Holy Communion. After her communion, as she was returning to her place near Katie, her eyes rested on the figure of a man in the far-off corner of the church, on his knees, in devotion. His head was bowed down so that his features were not discernible. His person was enveloped in a cloak, and the light was yet dim in the church, so that it was impossible for her to recognize who the person was, and yet, as her glance caught the figure, she started as with an electric shock. Her limbs trembled and almost refused to support her. A sudden faintness dimmed her eyes, and had not Katie observed her wavering steps, and come to her aid, she must have fallen to the floor before she reached her seat. After some rest she recovered herself, and, from

an irresistible influence, again turned her eyes to the place where she had seen the figure; but it was gone.

“Can it be that I have seen him?” she thought to herself; and then she felt as if Frank had been there and had made an appeal to her for a share of her prayers, and she responded with an overflowing heart.

As they left the church the sun was up. The morning was beautiful, and everything looked cheerful and alive with that striving and energy that so marked the people of California at that day, and told so plainly of the great future in store for this Bay City.

Katie's precaution to have a carriage in waiting was not amiss, for Ellen found that she shrank from a walk through the streets at that hour of the morning.

CHAPTER VIII.

FRANK's LETTER TO HIS WIFE.

Ellen partook of her morning meal, if not with decided appetite, yet with a real desire to acquire the physical strength so necessary to her now. After breakfast, retiring to her sleeping room, she closed the door and calmly took from her writing desk Frank's letter, or statement, and, after pausing for a moment, as it seemed to summon resolution, she tore it open, and read as follows:

FRANK's LETTER.

Oh, Ellen, how shall I address you? I know I have forfeited the right to love you, and to hold you to my breast as its darling. Yet while life lasts I cannot cease to do either, no more than I could cease to breathe and yet live. No; my injured, suffering, angel wife, as inconsistent as my conduct may seem to you, yet the *God* above us knows that I have never faltered for one moment in wholly undivided love for you. Do not, then, turn away from me when I call you, my loved, my darling wife. No; in mercy, do not turn away. I do not come to ask you to restore me to the place I have forfeited, but to implore and beg of you, by the memory of our happy childhood and of the love

I bore you, as boy and man, to listen and to hear me, that you may not scorn and despise me as false in heart as well as guilty. No; my poor, darling Ellen, believe me; I have not sinned because my heart grew cold in its devotion to you, but because in that wild, selfish devotion I forgot the *God* who sent me the priceless treasure that made this world seem almost a paradise to me. Listen, Ellen, listen while, at your feet, I tell you the horrid tale. From the very moment I parted from you in Philadelphia one idea seemed to occupy my whole mind; it was to acquire gold enough to enable me to reunite myself to my darling wife. The crossing of the Isthmus, the wild luxuriance of the scenes there, the sufferings we endured in that burning climate waiting for the steamer to arrive from its passage around the Horn, all passed without a thought. The companions of my journey were unnoticed by me. In the end I had only a vague recollection of them all, and not one circumstance could I recall distinctly. As I stepped on land in San Francisco, the last scene before it seemed to me the parting with you in Philadelphia. Your last sad, sorrowing look was all I could distinguish as I looked back, and all I could see to strive for in the future, as I looked forward, was a success that would enable me to return to you. All religious duties were, at first, indifferently performed, then deferred from time to time, and at length almost wholly neglected. When I knelt in prayer, as of old, it was but a mockery, for the gift and not the Giver occupied all my thoughts. *God* was worshiped by my lips, while my heart was far away with you. In S—, where I located myself, there was no Catholic church when first I went there, and when the zeal of a good French priest and a few Irishmen began the erection of one, I paid no attention whatever to it, and no one in S— supposed me to be a Catholic in faith. The priest, with the committee, called on me, as they did on almost every one, for a contribution, and I well recollect their surprise when, prompted by a sudden emotion, I handed them a check for five hundred dollars, where they only expected twenty-five or fifty. They had no idea that in faith I was with them. So passed on the first year; my whole heart and energies devoted to the acquisition of gold. I was successful in all my efforts, but “More” and “More” was my cry, as gold fairly streamed in upon me, and the acquisition so charmed and dazzled me that at the end of the year I sought and obtained your consent to remain one year longer. With renewed exertions, from early morning till late at night, I sought to increase my wealth, and often lay down in my comfortless bed and dreamed of returning home to you with millions and millions, and of seeing you in queenly state, surrounded by magnificence, and

dispensing favors to the whole cringing public, who were in humility at your feet; and then I would awake from my dream of pride to redouble my efforts to realize it all, and find my paradise, not above with *God*, but here below with you. Every effort seemed to prosper, and I said, in my pride: "There is no such word as fail to a man of my abilities; all my ambition seeks for will be mine." I was proud, too, and self-complacent of my faith and truth to you, and looked with contempt on the unfaithful husbands I met with, worse than the Pharisees. I thanked not *God* but myself, that I was not like other men. Such was my career of forgetfulness and pride when, in making extraordinary efforts, on "steamer day," to make a larger shipment of gold than usual, I over-worked myself. The consequence was a cold, and then a fever, in which I lay for twenty-one days unconscious of all around me. On regaining my wandering senses, the first thing I perceived was that I was cared for by a young woman, who did all I required with the delicacy and kindness of a sister. When the Doctor next came he introduced her to me, with high praises, saying I owed her my life. I at once called Mr. Neil, my bookkeeper, and told him to settle with Miss Marsh in the most liberal manner, intimating that now my clerks' nursing would be sufficient. She went into tears, and said she could not leave me until I was quite recovered. The Doctor joined her in saying she must stay; that it would be dangerous to me for her to leave just yet. The result was I was thrown off my guard, and she remained. I could not help feeling deeply grateful, and, being totally deceived as to her history and true position and character, I was exposed to a danger from which *God* alone could save me. I had been totally unmindful of Him, and in that hour of my need He was unmindful of me. Then my eyes were opened to the woman's true character. I now felt and knew that all was lost; that every hope of worldly happiness was gone forever, for I was determined that you should know the 275 exact truth, and I foresaw the consequences. Oh, how worthless all my treasure of gold now appeared; in a moment it turned into lead in my sight. For a week I sought to escape from my own frightful thoughts by keeping myself half intoxicated, until one morning, when I was about to leave the store, Mr. Neil, who, you will recollect, was so long in the employment of the house in Philadelphia, and for whom I had the highest respect and esteem, and in whose integrity and honor I would confide all I held dear, stepped forward and requested to see me in the office for a moment. I followed him more as a truant boy follows an angry, sorrowing parent to hear words of reproof he knows he deserves, than as the condescending employer obeys the summons of one of his clerks.

As we entered the office, Mr. Neil closed the door, and, turning quickly round to me, grasped my hand and said, in a voice full of grateful emotion:

“Dear Mr. Harvey, you have always been a brother to me, I would even say a father, but that I am so much the older of the two; believe me, then, deeply grateful, and that I am prompted by affection and attachment as well as gratitude in seeking this interview.”

I at once interrupted him by saying: “Yes, dear fellow; I know you love me; I know your worth, your honor and your truth; I know, too, what you would talk to me of;” and, grasping him by both shoulders, I drew him close to me and whispered in his ear: “In plain words you want to say to me, that within a week I have become a drunkard and a false husband.”

“Oh! no, not so bad as that.”

“But yes; that is the way to talk it out; I see you are grieved for me, my old friend, but you must shake that feeling off, and try and keep from the public my humiliation and disgrace.”

“Oh! Mr. Harvey, do not speak in that terrible way; all is not lost; you can recover yourself now. I did not know the true character of this woman when Dr. Taylor brought her here, or I would have let you die rather than have consented to give her a foothold in your room; now, I find she is well known in this town, and I was disgusted on hearing yesterday that when she went out and made some purchases of fine dresses, she had the audacity to assume your name in the addresses she gave for the packages to be sent to.”

As he told me this, drops of cold perspiration stood on my forehead, and a deadly horror seemed to be creeping through my whole body. He did not perceive this and went on:

“Have you received Mrs. Harvey's three letters, that arrived while you were sick, and that I gave the nurse for you?”

My start and look of astonishment satisfied him of the fact that I had never received them.

“No!” he went on, “why, I asked her yesterday if she had delivered them, and she said she had; but, as I had some doubts of her truth, I thought it better to retain the one that came by the last mail to hand you myself. Here it is.”

As he said this, he handed me the letter and left the office, believing, I suppose, that I would prefer to be alone while I read it. What a sight for me, just then, was a letter from you. My trembling, unsteady hand could not hold it and it fell at my feet, with my name and address, 276 written in the well-remembered hand, uppermost. I remained, with my eyes riveted on it, unable to move from the spot. There I stayed, reading, or rather spelling, over and over the words of the direction. How long I staid there, I cannot tell, but not a circumstance of my life that was connected with you, from the day I first saw you, away back in my boyhood, when you came with our uncle to Philadelphia a weeping, sorrowing orphan child, up to the time I left you, to seek gold in California, but passed in review before me with the vividness of reality. Oh, how distinctly I heard you thank me, as you then did, for wiping away your tears and for exerting myself to cheer you that day of our first meeting. On, on came all the other scenes of our happy, blessed childhood; and through them all, as plainly as I ever heard it, rang your loved voice in song or story, or in mirth or laughter. Then came our first sad parting, when you went to Emmetsburg and Harry and myself to Georgetown. Again I saw you stealing toward us, as you did the evening before our departure, and heard, oh, so plainly! your sweet, gentle words of sisterly love, as with blushes that gave the scene its life-long charm, you unfolded your little treasure of parting gifts of students' caps and slippers, made for us by your own dear hands. Then came the tormenting, yet delightful scene of our meeting again, when you refused to be treated as a child any more, or to regard me any longer as a schoolboy and a cousin, with a boy's and a cousin's privileges. Then came in review that happiest of all happy years that preceded our marriage, ending with our engagement. How plainly I saw again your beaming eyes, as they met mine for the first time after I had drawn from you the confession that you loved me. That look, that then filled me with happiness to intoxication, now benumbed my brain with misery. Then came the sighs, the tears and all the mirth and intense happiness of our joyous wedding day. Then came your sad looks and tears at the idea of my going to California, and your warning words of a danger that lay in my path, and of the sin of trifling with our marriage vows of “until death,

never to part,” which nothing but dire necessity, you said, could justify. Then came the agony of hearing again your impassioned entreaty to be allowed to go with me and share with me all the dangers of my California life. Then the last sad breakfast and the parting. The last, long, sorrowing embrace and wild kisses from lips as cold as death. The panorama of all the happy past seemed now to close, and a dark shadow to settle on my soul. Oh, it was despair! so complete and utterly without hope, that for a moment, it appeared to me, I experienced a foretaste of the inconceivable woe of the damned. Self-destruction was all that I could see in the dark night, my sin had drawn around me; that could relieve or end my suffering; on it, I unhesitatingly resolved, and, as if aided by the arch fiend, I became at once calm and self-possessed; I picked up your letter, and with perfect composure locked it up in my private desk unread. When Mr. Neil returned he found me, to all appearance, my old self; I told him, in a cheerful voice, that I had made a resolution and that the past *was* past, and that in the future he should have no cause in my conduct for uneasiness or pain. I then told him that I should, perhaps, close my business in S— and wished him to balance all my accounts so as to let me see how I stood in all respects. The poor fellow looked truly happy, and cheerfully promised to 277 fulfill my wishes as soon as it was possible. It was now Friday, and I gave myself only until Saturday evening to make ready to put my resolve into execution. My desire was, so to manage my death that it would appear the result of accident, both to you and the public, for something within me, that I could not still, whispered that the act was disgraceful and cowardly. After due thought, I decided that my body should not be discovered after death. I will not go into all the details of preparation for my intended crime, which I cannot recall without a sickening horror. It is enough to state that I chose a lonesome, unfrequented slough, making out of the river, hid away in long tule wild grass, as a spot most suitable for my purpose. I placed there a weight, an old casting that I found in some rubbish near my store, with a rope attached. The banks of the slough were high, and my intention was to fasten this rope around my neck, drop the casting into the water below me, so that when I shot myself through the head, my body would be carried down in the dark waters forever safe from human eyes. Saturday evening came, and found me all ready. I placed your daguerreotype and last letter in my breast pocket, that they might be buried with me. I then carefully examined my pistol and placed it with care beneath the red Chinese silk sash I always wore around my waist. Mr. Neil, deceived by my almost cheerful manner, had no idea of the dark murder in my

heart. The woman Marsh was more shrewd, but I managed to quiet her suspicions. I gave out that I was about to spend the evening and night and all the next day, Sunday, with a friend.

Strange as it may appear, the telling of this lie troubled me, although I was about to commit a crime that could not be recalled or repented of. As I left the store, as I believed for the last time, I could not refrain from shaking hands with Mr. Neil, when bidding him good evening. This, and perhaps something in my manner, seemed to strike him, for he held my hand in his for a moment and looked earnestly in my face. Without appearing to notice his look of almost inquiry, I said, quietly: "On Monday morning I want to show you some corrections you will have to make in our account-current with Howard, Mellus & Co. and with Taffy McCahill & Co., of San Francisco. Both these houses have received some money on my account, of which I did not advise you." This had the effect I anticipated. It carried his thoughts from me to his own little world, my ledger. I now started out on a quick walk for the lonesome, dark spot in the tule grass where my career was to end. There was a wild but subdued excitement in my brain, and as I hurried on with unfaltering steps, my eyes seemed to see more than they ever saw before, and my ears to hear more than they ever heard before. The coming darkness, to my intense gaze, looked terribly fearful, and seemed closing down in anger on my very existence. To my imagination, my ears plainly discerned the muffled tread of a legion of dark spirits all around me, leading and urging me forward. The slough was about three miles from my place of business. I had to keep the main road for about two miles before coming to the cattle path, or trail, that led through the tule grass to the slough. I had almost reached this point when some one in a buggy came dashing toward me. I turned to leave the road, but it was too late. I was hailed with:

278

"Halloo, Harvey! Where the mischief are you bound, or are you lost out here at this hour?"

I stopped, and recognized a Mr. Myers, a business friend, one of my best customers from the interior, and a worthy, honorable man. I made some confused excuse as to walking for health, etc.

"Come, jump in," Myers continued; "I will talk on business as we drive into town."

There was no get off, so into his buggy I went. I experienced a most painful sensation as I did so. A few minutes before I had, in thought, bid farewell to all the world and all its affairs. Now, I was forced, as it were, to return to it, and tell Mr. Myers the price of flour, tobacco, long-handled shovels, cotton drilling, used for damming the streams, and all other merchandise used in the mining districts.

“You must load me to-morrow,” said he, “even if it is Sunday; for my teams will all be in to-night, and you are no better Christian than I am a Jew, and yet I have been to work all this day—my Sabbath.”

“Christian!” said I, and the word sent a cold shudder through my frame. “If you are no better Jew than I am a Christian, you have not much to boast of.”

“Well, Harvey, this is a sad and wicked world, as they say in the play; and my wife says this California of ours is the most wicked corner of it all; and that if we do not begin soon to act better, the devil will get us all, both Jew and Christian. But I say,” he continued, “God is good, and may look with mercy on our peculiar position. Anyway, that is the way I argue the point with my good wife, and hope I may be right.”

On reaching the town, I left Mr. Myers, telling him that if I was not at the store the next day when he called, Mr. Neil would attend to everything for him just the same as if I was there. It was now night, and so dark that I could not find my way back to the slough; so, with regret, I had to defer until morning the execution of my unshaken resolution.

I recollected I had a duplicate key of the back door store; so at a later hour I stole in unobserved, and threw myself on a pile of opened blankets which lay on one of the counters—there to watch for the first dawning of the morning that I was determined should light my way to the slough. Sleep was slow in coming; and for hours I lay in mental agony, turning from side to side, and, strangely, I found myself, almost against my will, reflecting over and over the words of my Jew friend: “God is good, and may look with mercy on our peculiar position.” At length, overpowered and weary

from excitement, I fell into a profound sleep. Now, in my dreams, I was by the slough, in the yet dim light of the coming day. The dark, deep water looked terribly lonesome. The morning wind whistled and murmured mournfully through the tall, wild tule grass. Without flinching, I adjusted the rope, let the casting drop over the bank, and, turning my back to the dismal water, with steady hand shot myself through the brain. As the ball crashed through my head, I seemed to leap forward and then fall backwards at full length on the ground, my head alone over the bank, while the weight appeared to tighten the rope on my neck, until my staring eyes and bloodstained features and whole body became one hideous, swollen mass. Then I 279 heard rushing sounds of confusion, and voices from towards the town. Nearer and nearer they came; and now I could hear my friend Myers' voice above them all, as, leading the way, he cried out: "Yes; here I saw him last night, entering the tules in this direction, and here, now, are fresh footprints, and none returning." In an instant more a dozen dogs broke through the tules and commenced to howl piteously around my body. Then came Myers and Neil, followed, it seemed to me, by all the inhabitants of S—. Horror and amazement seemed to pervade the whole throng.

"It is Frank Harvey! It is Frank Harvey! Take off the rope! Take off the rope!" cried a dozen voices at once.

Some one, more forward than the rest, dropped on his knees, with bowie-knife in hand, to sever the rope, when, just then, the whole crowd seemed to open for some new-comer, and fall back in mute astonishment and awe. Oh, merciful *God*! the agony of that sleeping hour seemed now at its height, and beyond anything I could suffer during any waking moment of my life. For there I saw you, with terrible distinctness, advancing where the parting throng had cleared the way, accompanied, it appeared to me, by a troop of bright, angelic beings, all robed in garments of dazzling whiteness and purity. In your dark hair were entwined the same wreath of flowers, the sparkling diamonds you wore on our wedding day; but oh, how fearful to me was the changed expression of your countenance! On that blessed day, every feature, every look, when turned on me, expressed unbounded calm, confidence and love. Now every feature wore an expression of anger, scorn and contempt. As you approached close to my mutilated body, you drew from your finger the plain gold ring I had myself placed there. Holding it in your hand, you gazed on my

body for a moment; then, casting it on my breast, exclaimed: “Oh, yes! it is he! There, take that ring, which was to be the emblem of a union without end, but which you have now severed for all eternity. Miserable coward! that could not summon the courage to endure a short life, though in suffering it might be—that would pass like a dream—that we might enjoy together boundless happiness with *God* and His angels. What you had lost by your infidelity, if repented of, was only at the most a few years of this life's happiness, and was as nothing to what you have forfeited by this great crime of self-murder. We are now separated for all time and eternity, and scorn is all I can feel for you.” And now, speaking in a voice of authoritative command, you appeared to turn to the crowd, and continued: “Let no Christian burial ground be contaminated by the reception of the remains of this miserable suicide. Let no Christian hands touch his mutilated body. No! Let him rest in the spot that he himself has chosen. In the dark, foul waters of this stagnant slough. There,” you continued, as with your slender white foot, gifted, it seemed to me, with magic power, you spurned my body; “*go! go! Coward! coward!* And slowly over the high bank my body seemed to slide, and with a fearful plunge to strike the waters far below. A piercing cry of agony broke from my lips, and, awakening, I bounded from my blanket bed to the floor, trembling in every limb and drenched with perspiration from head to foot, with your last words, “Coward, coward,” yet ringing fearfully in my ears. I grasped one of the pillars that supported the main ceiling of the building, or I should 280 have fallen. Soon recovering myself, I perceived the first faint dawn of the morning light showing itself through the small window over the store door. I recollected the dark work I had laid out for that hour; but now my terrible dream, with your looks of withering scorn and contempt, came plainly before me; and I tried to summon courage to forego my resolution and return to the world and endure, manfully, all the suffering and mortification that might be in store for me. I had partly succeeded, and was about to throw myself on my knees, as I used to do of old, and pray for assistance, when my ear caught the sound of a light tread on the floor above me. I started and listened; for it came towards the stairway that led to the store. In an instant the truth flashed upon me, that the girl Marsh had been aroused by my cry, and was coming to look for me. If I had just heard, in the distance, all the legions of hell rushing to seize me, I could not, it appeared to me, have been filled with greater terror than I was now, on hearing that light footstep on the stairway. My good resolutions vanished. Death on the spot where I stood, by my own hand, or in the most public

street of S—, with all the disgrace of dying a suicide, seemed as nothing in comparison with ever again meeting and falling into the power of that woman. With one noiseless bound I reached the door at the foot of the stairs, and gently turned the key in the lock. I felt for my pistol in my breast pocket. It was there, and I knew well prepared for use. Without knowing exactly why, I snatched a gleaming bowie knife from a case on the counter and thrust it beneath my sash. Then I heard a light knock at the stairway door, and my name called in a low voice. My teeth chattered and my knees trembled, and that terrible despair I had before experienced again seized me; and again I saw no hope, no relief nor end to my sufferings but in death. My resolution was now fixed. The rising sun of that morning, I was determined, should not shine for me. By the door I had entered, in wild haste I left the store. Then on I rushed to clear myself of the town and find some new spot where I should, undisturbed, end my sufferings. I could not now face the slough where I had made the preparations. The vision of my night's dream was too terribly vivid.

While I sought death, I sought at the same time to fly from your angry words and looks, by leaving the town in an opposite direction to the road that lead to the scene of my vision. I had no fixed determination, and had gone but a short way when, turning a corner, I found myself in company with some twenty persons, mostly women, hurrying on in the same direction with myself. At first I could not imagine what this meant, for it was yet far from clear light, and my excited imagination made me for a moment fear that my desperate intention was discovered, and that the whole town was aroused by it. A few steps further, however, brought us opposite a building into which the crowd turned. I looked up and there stood the neat little church I had subscribed for, but had never entered, and between me and the bright morning sky stood out, as if appealing to me, the cross surmounting the little steeple. Just then the tinkle of the little bell, that I knew so well as indicating the commencement of service, caught my ear. It appeared to me that I stood once more before dear St. Joseph's Church, and that I had come to hear early mass, as hundreds of times I had done in Philadelphia. 281 I stood overpowered by recollections of the past, unable either to fly from the spot or enter the church. I think at that moment there was a desperate struggle between the arch fiend and my Guardian Angel for control. One moment I was about to enter, the next to fly, when suddenly, the enchanting and solemn music of our church service broke forth sweetly on the early

morning stillness. It wanted but this to complete the illusion, that it was indeed St. Joseph's Church that stood before me, and the good Father Barbelin was its pastor. It was all so like those devotions he used to have just before the break of day, with sweet music that at that hour, above all others, arouses every feeling of devotion and piety in our nature. I seemed carried back to all the good influences of my youth, and, yielding to them, I entered. I sought an open pew in the shade of one of the pillars, and, sinking on my knees, with head bowed down, all the prayer I could utter was that of the publican. The wild storm in my heart seemed allayed, and courage and confidence came to soothe my agitated frame. My being in the church and my evident agitation of feeling had not escaped the notice of the good priest, who was the same to whom I had given the subscription. As soon as service was closed and most of the people had left the church, he came to where I was, and, leaning over me as I yet knelt, said, in a voice full of tender gentleness:

“Can I, either as a friend or as a priest, be of any service to you?”

As I looked up, his countenance struck me as being marked with good judgment as well as with kindness. In an instant I resolved to throw my whole future conduct upon his guidance. I made no answer, but, turning towards where the confessional stood, I pointed to it. He understood me, and walking back to the altar put on his surplice and stole, and then knelt some moments in prayer before entering the confessional. It required all my resolution to follow him, but, seeing the scriptural sentence inscribed beneath the cross that surmounted the confessional: “Come to me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you,” I seemed to acquire strength and courage, and entered. Then in humility, that made me feel as though I was but a meek child, I disclosed to the good Father all my transgressions and all my sorrows.

His advice was long and earnest, and closed by requesting me to come again that evening. As I left the church he threw himself in my way and saluted me in a cheerful voice, as though he had not before seen me that morning, and invited me to take breakfast with him, saying that he would be all alone, as, although there was another priest just then with him, he would not be at breakfast, as he was to say the late mass, and could not break his fast until after service. I knew he could not allude to anything I had told him in the confessional, except at my directly expressed wish; so I accepted

his invitation and after breakfast again restated to him all my troubles, and asked his advice, as a friend, as well as a priest. He told me that until he saw me in the church that morning, he had no idea I was a Catholic. When he spoke cheerfully of my future, I told him I had no hope that you would ever consent to our reunion. He said it might be so, but that it was my duty to send for you at once, and let you make your own choice when you should know all. The result was that under the good Father's advice, I did not return to the store, but stayed privately with him 282 all that Sunday and the next day until the boat was leaving for San Francisco, when I slipped off unnoticed. On arriving in the city, I disclosed everything to Henry, and requested him to repair to S. and have the woman Marsh discharged from my premises. I wrote confidentially to Mr. Neil to ask his aid for Henry. You know the rest. I wrote for you, but I let dark forebodings cast a shadow over the spirit of my letter, to partly, if possible, school you for the horrid tale that awaited you here. Whatever may have been the motives of the woman Gabit, she rather aided than did me any harm by her visit to you, for it saved me from imposing on some friend the painful task of being the bearer, to you, of news that was to wither and blight all your bright hopes of coming joy and worldly happiness. Now, I have told you *all*, Ellen, just as it is known to the *God* above us, not a circumstance that would add to my guilt have I knowingly left out. It was your right to know *all*, and when you have read these pages, be satisfied that there is not a secret of my life, to this hour of my existence, that is not shared by you. I am now at your feet; do with me as you please. All I directly ask for is that you will tell me that you want me to love you just as I do love you, and as I cannot help loving you to the end of my life. I want you to tell me that you wish me to live for *you* while it pleases God to leave us on this earth, and then to meet in heaven. I want you to tell me that you will watch every step of my life and pray to God to guide them all. I want you to write to me just as you used to do, and let me share every sorrow that may cross your path in life—that life that, but for me, would have been all so bright and joyous. I do not ask to share any joys or sunshine that God may, in His mercy, grant to your weary way. That would be more than I deserve. Your tears are all I ask to share. I want you to tell me that you do not despise or scorn me, and that I may, as of old, call you, though far away I may be, “My own darling Nellie.” Oh, Ellen! even though it should be that we are not again to be reunited on earth, you can be my second guardian angel, to aid me to subdue my proud nature, and bear up manfully against the humility of my position, and to, every day, do

something to make me worthy of a place with you in heaven. And now, my darling Nellie, may God comfort and bless you, which will be, my darling angel wife, the unceasing prayer of your devoted husband,

FRANK HARVEY.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WIFE'S LETTER TO HER HUSBAND.

Sometimes, while reading Frank's letter, Ellen was forced to lay it down and give way to bursts of uncontrollable grief; but each time, with heroic efforts, she resumed her task, until, at length, as the day was far spent, she reached its closing words of prayer for her. I called to see her that evening, but she had told Katie to ask me to excuse her; so I did not see her till the next afternoon, when she handed me a letter for Frank. As she did so, she was seized with a violent fit of hysterical grief, and it was all that Katie and I could do to calm her. Twice she took the letter back from me, and, laying it on the table before her, wept and mourned over it, and kissed with passionate kisses the address, with all that sort of wild grief with which the living part with some loved form at the edge of the grave. At length, summoning all her resolution, she handed me the letter, and with hurried steps disappeared from the room. This closed the last of those terribly sad scenes I went through with poor Ellen at the Union Hotel. She occupied apartments there, in all, but thirteen days; yet, as I look back now, it seems to me it must have been at least a year, for no year of my life left the impression the events that transpired there in that short period left on me. That spot, the corner of Merchant and Kearny streets, is connected in my mind with a sort of mysterious, sad, lonesome feeling, that I can never shake off. It is so inseparably connected with the sorrows and sufferings of poor Ellen and Frank, both of whom I devotedly loved. Though happy, in my own family, as man can be, and in all my surroundings, yet their fate has cast a shadow over my path, seen by myself only, it may be, that no sunlight ever wholly dispels.

The Union Hotel, built by Middleton, Selover & Joyce, at a cost of a quarter of a million of dollars, then in all its elegance, 284 and the pride of our city, was afterwards burned to the ground, rebuilt

and burned again; then rebuilt and sold to the city and converted into public offices. Yet, all these changes and more than twenty years of time, have left the spot unchanged to me, and I hardly ever, even now, pass that corner that I do not start as though Ellen must be somewhere there; and, sometimes, so vividly does she come to my mind and sight, at those times, that I almost fancy I again hear her mournful cry and convulsive sobbing, as she dropped on her knees and joined in prayer with the good missionary, Katie and myself, that eventful afternoon when the Father accompanied me to see her. Then, again, I sometimes fancy, as I pass that building, that I hear her call me by name, and before I recollect myself, I have turned to enter, in obedience to the summons. My wife shares with me in these feelings, and we often find ourselves walking an extra block to avoid that part of Kearny street. It was but a short time ago that we were spending an evening with a friend in Stockton street, where we remained so late that we had to walk home, the cars having stopped running. The night was beautiful, unclouded, and moonlight. Our shortest way lay down Washington street and then along Kearny. As we walked along, our conversation happened to turn on a subject deeply interesting to us both, as parents. It was of a happy as well as of an absorbing character. Time and distance passed unnoticed, and even the ever-shunned spot on Kearny street was forgotten until my wife's arm suddenly clutched mine tightly and I felt her tremble all over, as she stopped short. I looked up and found we were on Kearny, nearly opposite Merchant street. As I looked, I saw a lady and gentleman standing opposite the old Union building and apparently viewing it all over. I apprehended in a moment my wife's sudden nervous start, for the same tremor passed through myself as I recognized a most remarkable resemblance in the persons before us to Ellen and Frank, in figure, dress and form. Without speaking, or apparently observing us, the lady took the gentleman's arm, and they disappeared around the corner into Merchant street. We hurriedly resumed our walk, and, as we passed, we looked down that dark street, but the strangers were nowhere to be seen. Neither of us spoke for a time; at length, as we reached California street, my wife said, in a half choked voice:

“Henry, what do you think?”

“Think, dear Jennie,” said I. “Of course, I do not *think* anything about it. I *know* the persons we saw were flesh and blood, like ourselves, idly looking at that building. I acknowledge the coincidence of their remarkable resemblance to our dear, departed loved ones, for it struck me, as I saw it did you; but, of course, it was only a coincidence, and even that would not, perhaps, have struck us, if we had seen these persons anywhere but in that spot.”

“But,” urged Jennie, “what became of them? They were not in Merchant street when we looked down it as we passed.”

“Dear Jennie, do not allow yourself to be superstitious,” I continued. “Recollect, in the first place, that Merchant street is dark, even on a bright night like this, and then, you know, there are doors to every building on both sides, one of which these persons must have entered before we reached the street.”

“Well,” said Jennie, “of course, it must be as you say, but I am not half over the fright yet. You and I were just then so completely lost in our own happy thoughts and conversation, that my first feeling was that our childhood's loved companions appeared to us as a reproach for our selfish, entire forgetfulness of them, when new joys came to crowd our path, as on the occasion of this marriage of our darling child.”

All that night our dreams were of Ellen and Frank, but the cheerful light of the next morning dispelled the sad impressions that that walk home had left with us both in spite of all our efforts to cast them off.

But, to return from this digression to my story. As I took that letter to Frank from Ellen, I fully understood that, in parting with it, Ellen felt as though she was parting with Frank. The next day Frank gave me the letter to read. It was as follows:

My own darling, loved husband: My task is done; every sentence, every word of the terrible story of your California life is now before me, as vivid and living in my thoughts and memory as though each separate word that told the horrid tale had been seared on my brain and vision with fire that

was never to go out or darken. I read it but once, but, oh, my darling Frank! how fearfully perfect I have it all by heart. Wherever I am, whatever I am doing, over and over I trace every circumstance you have related. Sometimes it appears to me I am standing on the steamer deck that brought you to California, and see you wrapped in thoughts of me, and me *alone*, and I tremble, for I feel as though I was then displacing *God* from His just place in your thoughts. My darling husband, we are terribly punished for our forgetfulness of our entire dependence on Him. I am far the worse of the two, 286 for it was my place, my duty, to have reminded you of dangers that can alone be escaped from by reliance on *God*. No, Frank, in my pride and folly I exalted you in my thoughts above every man on earth. I believed other men could be weak in temptation and fall into sin, but it never once crossed my imagination that you could. Your long sickness in S—, in the hands of that unfortunate creature who saved your life, your agony at the result of her presence in your house, your despair and terrible purpose, that horrid, horrid vision that was sent by a merciful *God* to save you, will all haunt me while life is left to me; yes, and will be a burden for me to lay down only at the edge of the grave. Time and *God's* grace may enable me to support it well and cheerfully, but it will never pass away nor grow lighter. My darling, loved husband, what now shall be our course? You are forgiven within my heart of hearts; yes, without the least reservation, my darling Frank, for whatever fault or sin there is in the past is mine as well as your's to repent of, and will only be remembered when I pray to *God* to forgive us both our pride, and grant us the grace to accept His chastisement without a murmur. It is no small happiness that our hearts are *one*, as of old, and will beat together in sorrow, and in sunshine, too, if permitted to fall on our future way of life. But, Frank, my suffering darling, how is it, that when I think of now joining you, I see a gulf at my feet that nothing seems to bridge over; awake or asleep, I see the gulf there, and find it utterly impossible to bring myself to attempt its passage. In my struggles to overcome myself, my reason itself grows dim. I feel that to do so would violate some hidden sentiment dear and sacred to us both. Some indescribable feeling, that if I were to disregard, you could not, it appears to me, respect and love me, just as you used to do. No, my darling, I find we cannot regain what we have lost by rudely attempting to crush out what our education fostered and entwined around our love for each other, and gave it such an exquisite charm. I feel that we can love each other best by remaining apart, for awhile at least, and in this I want your free consent, for, in all things, I am again your wife

to command. *God* can bridge the gulf our forgetfulness of the necessity of His care opened between us. Let us look forward then with hope, even for this world. You ask me to say that I want you to love me just the same as ever. My darling husband, your love to me is life itself. Yes, Frank, love me, and call me my pet name, and it will, to me, have its old endearing sound. You ask me to tell you to live for me. Yes, my darling, live for me, for on you I will depend for all my wants. No dress nor ornament shall I ever wear but those that come from your hands. Send me back to your darling mother's home, and bid me stay until you return from California, which do not defer longer than stern duty to others demands. But, oh, Frank, if sickness should again overtake you, send for me, send for me without a moment's hesitation; I will fly to you, and then that horrid gulf will be closed, never to open more. And if sickness comes to me, Frank, fly to me, fly to me, and you shall find no gulf between us. Frank, my darling, how can I say the parting words? My brain is weary, and scarce fit to guide me to them. May *God*, in His goodness, bless and keep you safe, is the prayer of your darling wife. NELLIE.

CHAPTER X.

SUSAN MARSH'S SUBSEQUENT HISTORY—CONCLUSION.

To complete this little history, I have a few more events of interest to relate, in addition to what Henry has told us.

Katie, Ellen's faithful attendant, was soon married to Peter, the engineer, and made him a true and loving helpmate. Peter, in a very little time, obtained the partnership his ambition sought, and is now one of our first citizens in wealth, as well as in social position. Katie was but a bright type of that class of Irish working girls that pushed their way to California with the first immigration. Their industrious habits, and unquestioned morality and virtue, caused them to be sought for as wives by our pioneer farmers and mechanics; and they are now to be found, all over the State, in happy homes, surrounded by good and virtuous children; an honor to the community in which they live, and the pride of the race from which they sprang.

At the time Henry Philips went to S—to dismiss Susan Marsh from Frank Harvey's premises, he was filled with the bitterest and most indignant feelings towards her, and intended to be outspoken and summary in his dealings with her. He took a check for one thousand dollars with him, which Frank told him to give her. He found her seated in the rocking-chair in the little room she had occupied, next to Frank's. "Woman," said he, "I come to dismiss you from this place." She started from her seat, and, regarding him with a cold, desolate, hopeless look, shrank away from him like a withered thing. Henry had not the heart to say another angry word; so, changing the tone of his voice, he continued, holding out the check towards her: "Here is a thousand dollars Mr. Harvey sent you." She did not reach for it; so, after a pause, and in a voice that was almost kind, he said: "Yes; take it. It is lawfully yours, and if you use it rightly it may help you to turn over a new leaf, and to find a returning road from the terrible life you have been leading." A glance of the faintest hope seemed to struggle for expression in the gloom 288 of her face. She reached for the check with a trembling hand. Henry hastily left the room, and, as he hurried down the stairs, he found himself muttering a prayer for the unfortunate girl. Susan Marsh did make an effort to turn over a new leaf, and the big charity to be found in California, and in California *only*, gave her the chance. By an accident, the very next day, she met with a Mr. and Mrs. Burk, a worthy couple, who were about to open a restaurant in the neighborhood, where now stands the city of Marysville. To Mrs. Burk she fully explained her history, and her resolution to change her life. Without hesitation, the Burks determined to help her; so they hired her to assist them, as cook, at the highest wages then going. In this new position she was entirely unknown. She worked hard, and continued faithful to her resolution and to her employers. After a year thus well spent, she received an offer of marriage from a rough, honest pioneer cattle-man, who often refreshed himself at Mr. Burk's restaurant when his business caused him to visit Marysville. Susan rejected the offer over and over, but her suitor would not take "*No*" for an answer; so, Susan's request, Mr Burk gave him her true history. The stock-man reflected a moment, then said:

"You say she has turned over a new leaf for a fact and truth?"

"I believe it, *truly*, and so does my wife," said Mr. Burk.

“Well, then,” continued the stock-man, “I am not exactly a saint myself, and I will not go back on her. My home shall be her home, and *God* will help us both.”

And so it was that Susan Marsh became an honest man's wife, and that man had never cause to regret his generosity.

When Frank read Ellen's letter he was not cast down, for he was a better judge of Ellen's feelings than any one, and had harbored no hope of an immediate reunion. Her full and entire forgiveness, and her expressions of unchanged love gave him the greatest consolation, and made him feel more like himself than he had been for months. The evident struggle, too, she was making to pass the “gulf” she spoke of, filled him with hope for the future, and made life once more dear to him. He wrote a warm, generous letter to her, acquiescing in all her plans for the future, and saying everything that he thought would make her feel happy. One more sorrowful day was in store for him, however, that wilted him almost to the ground. It was the day the 289 steamer left San Francisco, with Ellen on board. Henry had found a most agreeable escort for Ellen in an Episcopal clergyman and his amiable wife, who had been out here in the interest of the Episcopal Church, which was then just struggling for position in San Francisco, and who were now returning to New York. Mr. and Mrs. H— were highly educated and of the most refined manners, devoid of all those narrow prejudices which hang around ignorant pretenders in religion, of which, however, we see so little in California. Henry gave them an outline of Ellen's story, and found that they were of those who could perfectly comprehend her, and as Henry related the sad events neither could restrain their deep emotion. Before leaving, Rev. Mr. H—, prompted by gentlemanly feeling as well as by admiration of the old missionary, Father D—, called to see him, and requested his views as to making any further effort on the passage home to move Ellen's resolution.

“If she herself opens the subject,” said the Father, “I would advise that you and your good lady say whatever seems well to your judgment at the time, but otherwise leave all to time. For *God* will, in his own way, guide the poor, dear child. This is my view, but I see you understand her

character, and I feel sure you can rely on your own judgment how to act, and will do as well as I could possibly do.”

As the day for Ellen's leaving approached, Frank sent her a powerful glass, with the request that as the steamer went through the Golden Gate, she should look to the summit of Telegraph Hill, for he would be there, waving his handkerchief. She took the glass with eagerness, and did look, and did see him. It was the only sight she had of him in California. I will not describe the scene which followed that sight, as related to me by the clergyman's wife in after years. How she fainted away, the glass dropping from her hand overboard, and the sad hours and days that followed; for it would only give useless pain. Ellen arrived home in safety, and was received by Frank's mother and Uncle John Grant as a loved child only could be received. Under their fostering care she became calm, cheerful and almost happy.

After Ellen's departure, Frank at once returned to S— to wind up his business. He was cheerful and always composed, exact and clear in all his business transactions; but a close observer would see that a great change had come over him. His 290 merry, ringing laugh was no more heard. His appetite was slight, and his great physical powers seemed somewhat to yield. It was about three months after Ellen's departure that a friend induced him to take a ride with him in the country. They were overtaken by the very first storm of the season. It was terribly severe, and drenched them both to the skin. Frank took a severe cold, from which he never entirely recovered. It soon settled on his lungs, and then a fear seized him that he should never see Ellen again. This induced him, without a moment's hesitation, to turn all his business over to Mr. Neil to close up, and he left for home in the very next steamer for Panama. On his journey he grew worse and worse, so that the day he arrived at his mother's he was unable to walk without assistance. Frank's determination to leave California was so suddenly taken that he had no way of advising Ellen or his mother of his intentions, for no telegraph then crossed the plains; so the first intimation any of them had was a dispatch his mother received from New York, announcing his arrival.

Ellen was in Philadelphia on a visit to her uncle at the time, so that when Frank reached his mother's house Ellen was not there to meet him. As his mother threw her arms around his wasted form,

she could not restrain her sobs and weeping. Uncle John Grant, too, gave way to bitter grief. “Oh, mother, my own loved, darling mother, and dear Uncle John, do not weep so, I beseech you; for if the worst comes to the worst, you know I am here with you all, and my darling Ellen will be here, too, and our separation will, after all, be only for a day, and then we shall all meet to part no more; so do not weep, my darling mother.”

The next day Ellen arrived. Mrs. Harvey and Uncle John ran to meet her as she alighted from the carriage. A hurried kiss they gave her, but not a word could they or Ellen utter. There were many friends in the parlor and hall, who had come to make inquiries for Frank. As Ellen passed through them, all arose from an involuntary impulse; but not a word was spoken as she hurried on towards Frank's room.

In a moment more Ellen and Frank were clasped in each other's arms. Yes; the “gulf” Ellen had seen at her feet in San Francisco was gone forever. Yet one short month was all of this life that was left to them to enjoy together on earth; for at the end of that time they were called on to part—and with 291 religious faith and perfect resignation they obeyed the summons.

Ellen continued to reside with Frank's mother until her death, and they were a loving and devoted mother and daughter to each other.

Then came *Death* once more on his mission. Uncle John Grant and the dear mother both died in quick succession, leaving Ellen alone. She was the wealthiest and most beautiful widow in southern Pennsylvania.

In fulfillment of a long settled determination, she resigned all her wealth. First, she gave liberally to relatives who needed a helping hand, and all the rest she assigned to charitable institutions. She then bade farewell to the world. Resigning her name, and taking a new one in religion, she became a Sister of Charity. She was one of the most active and useful members of the sisterhood, and always seemed cheerful and happy. After years, she was sent on the mission to New Orleans. It was just

before the rebellion broke out, and before its close her task was done, and her crown won, for she died from an all night's exposure on the battle-field succoring the wounded.

When I went East, eight years ago, impelled by an irresistible feeling, I turned out of my way to visit the grave of Frank Harvey. The monument was of the finest marble, chaste and beautiful in plan and construction. On one side, in a niche cut in the monument, was inserted a cross fashioned with exquisite taste, from California gold quartz, and sparkling with the precious metal. As I leaned on the massive iron railing surrounding the monument, memory carried me back to the days when Frank Harvey and all of us first heard of gold in California, and I could not help exclaiming: "Oh, California, California! if every grave into which the discovery of the long-hidden treasure has sunk a weary, broken heart, was decked as this grave is, there is scarce one graveyard from the St. Lawrence to the Rio Grande, that would not, in some part of it, flaunt thy glittering GOLD!"

ADA ALLEN;

OR,

THE HUSBAND's SURPRISE.

CHAPTER I.

ARRIVAL IN SAN FRANCISCO—CAPTAIN CASSERLY.

In the month of March, 1850, soon after the first wharf accommodation was provided in the harbor of San Francisco, the mail steamer arrived from Panama, bringing, as one of her thousand passengers, the heroine of the little history which I am about to relate. The steamer's gun was fired as she entered the harbor, and was heard all over the city. Hundreds, as was always the case on this signal, rushed towards the wharf. It was after dark when the steamer came alongside, and then was enacted one of those scenes never to be forgotten by a "49er," and of which a description is impossible. Husbands dashed wildly around looking for their expected wives; brothers to find an expected sister, who had summoned courage to face California life; friends looking for friends; sons

for fathers; brother for brother. It seemed a general scramble, made worse by hotel and boarding-house runners seeking for guests. You hear joyous exclamations and laughter on all sides, and sobbing and weeping too, but, as a whole, every one looks wild with joy and excitement. Now and then you observe a sad, anxious looking face. It is some young fellow, perhaps, who, having just graduated at college, has ventured to California to seek his fortune, 294 with scarce a dollar in his pocket. He has left for the first time fond parents, brothers and sisters, now so far away. His young heart quails within him as he realizes that the battle-ground of life is *now* before him, and that the struggle, in which he is to be an actor and upon which *his all* depends, has, in fact, begun this very night. But now, you can see, as you watch him, that he seems to shut his teeth together, and you fancy, from his resolute look, that he says to himself: "I am an American, and there is no such word as *fail* for me." Or, it may be, you see some poor wife, who has not yet seen her husband coming to claim her, and whose heart is choked with vague apprehensions of evil! Or, it may be, your eye rests on a blooming young girl, with her heart full of the purest love, and of that courage to face a pioneer life, that is so much a part of the American character, and that has done so much to build us up and make us a great nation. She has come over the wild seas to her lover, on an understanding that he is to meet her, with priest and witness, on the steamer deck and take her from there his wife. Now look again, for there the lover comes, faithful to his promise, with a gay party full of joyous excitement, all laughing and fairly up-roarious, as they hug and kiss the now happy girl! The clergyman may be the Reverend Mr. *Ver Mehr*, who did so much for the Episcopal Church in those early days. The crowd all gather around, in hushed attention, as the reverend gentleman begins the solemn marriage ceremony of his church. The last word of the ceremony is said, and then a rush is made for the first kiss of the bride, but the husband is too quick for outsiders; the first from the lips of his brave pioneer wife is his! Then arises cheer after cheer, caught up by all, until now it rings along the whole length of the wharf. Look again; there comes a lady with her husband, whom she has just met. She has four fine children; the eldest is a beautiful little girl of eight years!

"Make way for the children! make way for the children! Stand aside! stand aside!" is now the cry from the crowd. Then some one calls out: "Three cheers for the children!" and "Three more for the mother who brought them!" adds another.

Oh! they are given with a will; for nothing in those days stirred the hearts of Californians as did the advent of a virtuous woman and children, or a marriage scene!

Look again. See that powerful-looking man in the miner's rig of red overshirt, with the customary Chinese red silk sash 295 around his waist. His exterior is rough, but his heart is gentle. He is pressing forward towards the children as they are making their way through the crowd, and, leaning forward, he says to the mother, as he holds out a beautiful specimen of gold:

“I dug this out myself. May I give it to you, little girl?”

A glance at his face, and the gentle tone of his voice, convinces the mother that the gift is an offering of an absent father of children, far away and devotedly loved, and her heart is full at the thought.

“Yes, certainly,” she responds; and as the child takes the gift with a sweet “Thank you, sir,” the mother adds, “Kiss the gentleman, Emma.”

Then the child raises her little cherry lips, and the miner stoops and kisses her. He turns quickly away, drawing his broad-brimmed California hat down more over his face, to hide from view struggling tears and emotion that he could not control.

Now, as we stand on the lower step of the stairs that lead to the main cabin, let us look again, and we shall see a lady standing at the door of a stateroom, holding the hand of a child, a sweet little girl, while another, a fine little boy, is amusing himself near her. She is young, and remarkably beautiful; stylish and dignified in her bearing. You cannot define exactly the expression of her countenance. It betrays great anxiety; yet there is a calmness and a sort of determined, forced repose about it that puzzles you as you observe her closely. Just then she speaks to the stewardess, and asks her to request the Captain to come and see her. After a few moments the Captain is there.

“What can I do for you, Mrs. Allen? I am at your command,” he said, politely.

“Captain,” said Mrs. Allen, with a cordial smile, but with a slight tremor in her voice, “I want to ask you if there are any of the police force near at hand.”

“Why, yes, dear Mrs. Allen, certainly there are; but I trust nothing has gone wrong,” said the Captain, looking surprised, if not alarmed.

“Oh, no, Captain, not in the least, I assure you, but I want an officer to accompany me to my husband's house.”

“Why, Mrs. Allen, I fear you have a low estimate of our city of San Francisco. I assure you there is not a city in the world where a lady, who *is* a lady, is so safe as in San Francisco. The 296 man who would insult or offend a lady in San Francisco would be dealt with without judge or jury the moment his offence was known.”

“That I perfectly understand, Captain; but yet I am somewhat timid, and I would be much obliged if you would introduce to me an officer with whom you, Captain, are personally acquainted, and to whom you would say that you personally know me.”

Mrs. Allen said all this in a tone of decision, evidently intended to cut off all further question by the Captain.

“Most certainly I will, with great pleasure,” said the Captain. Then he added, so as to put her at her ease: “And undoubtedly you are right. It is the best way.”

In a few minutes the Captain reappeared, accompanied by Captain George Casserly, of the San Francisco police.

Captain Casserly was as odd a genius as ever lived. I knew him well, as he was my fellow-passenger from New York around Cape Horn. He was full of fun, and, I may say, of absurdity, too. Nothing was business to him if it did not have a streak of waggery or some sort of excitement about it. He loved mystery, and was never so pleased as when his position in the Police Department led

him into the secrets of San Francisco life. He was good-hearted and charitable to a fault, which often led him to overlook what his duty as a police officer should have made him see. He was careless to almost recklessness in all that related to himself, and never, apparently, gave a thought to the future.

As the steamer Captain left Mrs. Allen, and went on deck, almost the first person he met was Captain Casserly. In a few words he told him of Mrs. Allen's strange request. "For," said the Captain, "it would have been more natural if she had asked me to procure her an escort, or told me to send a messenger to let her husband know that she had arrived; but I saw she wanted no questions asked, so I want you, Captain, to let me have one of your force—some intelligent fellow—to see the lady home."

At once Captain Casserly's face, usually almost stolid when in repose, lit up, and a bright twinkle of fun or pleasure danced in his eyes.

"Fun on hand, sure," said he to himself. Then to the Captain: "You know the lady, personally, I suppose, Captain?"

"Most certainly I do; and she is of one of the best families in the State of New Jersey, and her husband you must know, Edmund F. Allen, who is a merchant in this city."

297

"Allen!" exclaimed Casserly, in a tone of surprise. "Of course I know him. He is of the firm of Allen, Wheeler & Co."

"The same," said the Captain.

"I will go with the lady myself, Captain; so introduce me."

When the Captain introduced the police officer to Mrs. Allen, he did so in a formal manner, at the same time saying something complimentary of him as an officer and as a man. Then, excusing

himself on the score of pressing duties elsewhere, he extended his hand to wish his passenger good-by.

Mrs. Allen's manner and expression changed in a moment. She grasped his hand, and, in a sweet, cordial voice, thanked him warmly for all his attentions and many kindnesses to her and the children.

“Do not speak of it, my dear Mrs. Allen. I did but my duty, and then I claim to be a personal friend of your husband's; and for him I would be glad to do much more, if in my power. Please tell him I will call at his place of business and congratulate him on this happy termination of his misery. He will now be the envy of all grass widowers in San Francisco.”

Mrs. Allen was on the point of asking him to call at the cottage, on Stockton street, but somehow she could not command the words. So, bowing with a smile, to acknowledge the Captain's compliment, she remained silent, and the Captain disappeared. Mrs. Allen now turned to the Police Captain, and, resuming her reserved manner, said, in a calm, steady voice:

“Now, Captain, you know who I am; but I see it puzzles you why I sent for you; but some other time I will explain. I am now in a hurry to leave this ship. I am under your protection, and I want you to so consider it until I say otherwise. I am giving you, and may give you, a great deal of trouble not properly belonging to your duty as a police officer, which you will please not ask me to accept without compensation.”

As she spoke she handed him three twenty-dollar pieces. At first the Captain drew back.

“I insist,” she continued, as she reached out the money.

The Captain then bowed, and took it.

“I did so,” said he, when he was telling me the story, “for two good and sufficient reasons. In the first place, my doing so put the lady more at her ease, and then it is a bad habit for one to get, to

refuse money when it is offered, no matter for what or 298 from whom. 'Pay in advance,' is always my motto, and it is a good one, particularly in our profession."

As the Captain dropped the money into his pocket, in a careless way, he said:

"Nothing surprises a police officer, Mrs. Allen. It is a part of his business *not* to be surprised. I am at your service, madam."

Mrs. Allen then took from her pocket-book a half sheet of note paper and handed it to the Captain, saying:

"Can you, Captain, go directly to the place designated in that paper?"

The Captain read, just audibly, the following direction:

"It is a nice little cottage on Stockton street, east of Washington. It sets back a little from the street. The lot is inclosed by a neat fence. There are some flowers and rose bushes in front. The little gate is of a pretty Gothic pattern. The cottage and fence are all painted white."

As he concluded reading the direction he said:

"Certainly, I know the locality to an inch."

While he was speaking, he walked over to where a lamp was suspended over the cabin table, and, raising the paper close to the light, scrutinized it closely, and then said, in a low tone:

"I thought I was not mistaken; so this is some more of 'Detective Bucket's' work. I begin to understand now."

"Well, then," said Mrs. Allen, "please procure a carriage that will take you, the children and myself to that place, with as little delay as possible."

The Captain left the cabin to obey, without a word. As he reached the wharf, he seemed lost in thought, and said, half aloud:

“Yes, I begin to work this case up. That is old ‘Mother Bucket’s’ handwriting, sure. I have got too many notes from her not to know it. I recollect, now, that, before she went East, she told me one day about that cottage, and something about Allen’s having an ‘over-dressure creature,’ as she called her, for a housekeeper. I took but little notice of it at the time, as I do of all she says, but now it throws light upon this case. She will get herself into a scrape, yet. I will snub her when she comes back, so that she will be glad to mind her own business. Well, Allen is a real good fellow, so I must try and help him out of this scrape. I see this must be another ‘Briggs case;’ *no doubt* 299 of *it*, and it is also easy to see that his wife (heavens! what a beautiful woman she is) is determined to catch him, but, I must save him, and it will spare her feelings too.”

As he spoke, he blew his whistle and in a moment a policeman approached him.

“Ah Jim! that is you, Well, go right off to Mallet’s livery stable, in Kearny street, and tell him to send me, here to the steamer, that best carriage of his, but you need not hurry him, particularly. Then go as fast as you can to that little white cottage in Stockton street, half a block east of Washington, in which Mr. Allen lives; call for that gentleman, and when he comes to the door, just say to him, so that no one else can hear you: ‘Captain Casserly desires me to say to you that your wife has arrived in the steamer, and is now on her way to this house in a carriage with him.’ If Mr. Allen is not at home, do not say a word to any one else, but come to the corner of Stockton and Washington streets, and, as the carriage turns the corner, get into a fit of coughing. I will notice you and understand that you did not find Allen.” Without asking explanation, on the policeman started, to do as he was directed. Mallet was too glad to get the order for his fine carriage, the best then in San Francisco, not to make all the haste he could, so that he was on hand much sooner than Captain Casserly wished. During all this delay, Mrs. Allen seemed to suffer more and more anxiety. Her eyes were almost wild with an excited expression of half-alarmed, searching scrutiny as every new face appeared in the cabin.

“Oh!” she exclaimed, “how long the Captain is in getting the carriage! What if Edmund happened to come here, looking for some expected friend!”

And at the thought she shrank back into her state-room.

“Oh! how could I meet him *here*! No; I must hurry away. We must meet each other when no one else is present, for then I will be the happiest woman that lives on earth, or,” here she stopped a moment, as if to overcome a choking sensation in her throat; then continued, in a trembling whisper: “or I will just die at his feet. Oh, *God* be my guide and helper!”

Captain Casserly now appeared, and announced the carriage as all ready. In the kindest and most considerate manner he helped Mrs. Allen to remove her children and all her things to the carriage. As soon as the carriage was in motion, Mrs. Allen, 300 overcome by her thoughts, lay back with a sort of gasp or heavy sigh that was almost a groan. The Captain's sympathy was awakened to the utmost, and he could not resist saying:

“My dear madam, it is useless to say that I do not partly divine your thoughts; but you may be totally deceived in what you fear; and, anyway, for the sake of these dear children, try to face it, whatever it may be, with calmness and courage.”

There was a tone of hearty good feeling and sympathy in the Captain's words that touched her sweetly; for in her trouble there was a lonesome, oppressive feeling about her heart that they seemed somewhat to relieve.

“Thank you, Captain; you are very kind,” said Mrs. Allen, making a great effort to recover her self-composure. “I trust and hope, and I believe, I shall find my husband perfectly well.”

She thus avoided recognizing that the Captain might understand the true cause of her fears.

Just then the carriage turned the corner of Stockton and Washington streets, and they all observed a man standing near, in a violent fit of coughing.

“Why, Mamma,” said little Alice, “that man is choking.”

“I think not, my love; it is only a bad cough.”

Captain Casserly said to himself: “I see my plan is overboard. Well, we must only face the music. Another Briggs' case, it must be, then. I will do as Captain Howard did; I will send the dame flying from the house.”

Now, my young readers, I am sure you want to know how it comes that a lady like Mrs. Allen appears in San Francisco without her husband's knowledge, in such wild excitement and deep anxiety. Let us go back some years in our history, and we shall ascertain.

CHAPTER II.

EDMUND ALLEN—A BEAUTIFUL GIRL.

Captain Monroe Allen, a retired sea captain, was a well-to-do farmer, living some twelve miles from Newark, New Jersey. He had a good wife and five children. The third boy, Edmund Franklin, they educated with a view to a mercantile life. So, after a course of good training at a commercial school, they found a place for him with the Captain's old employers, when he followed the sea, Gould, Fox & Co., wholesale dealers in drygoods, Pearl street, New York.

Edmund was a keen, shrewd, active, bright boy—handsome in person, off-hand and most polite in manners.

He made a good use of every hour of his time, and became a great favorite with the firm. So, three years passed, and now Edmund had almost reached his majority, when one morning Mr. Gould called him into the office, and, in a pompous, measured sort of a way, asked him to be seated. Then, in the same sort of tone, but in words very complimentary to Edmund, went on to say that, in consultation, the firm had decided to advance him to the position of head salesman, with, of course, a corresponding increase of salary.

Edmund's face lit up with a pleasant, expressive light, and he thanked Mr. Gould, and all the members of the firm, in the most cordial way, for the kindness intended, but told Mr. Gould that he could not avail himself of the offer, as he had made up his mind to at once start into something for himself, should it be in ever so small a way.

“My father,” continued Edmund, “says that the time for a man to make his fortune is from the age of twenty-one to forty-five—only just twenty-four years. So, you see, Mr. Gould, I have no time to lose, and must, if I can, begin to make my fight at once.”

Mr. Gould looked surprised, and a little put out. Then he said, in a changed tone of voice—it had lost its pompous, patronizing sound, and was now familiar, friendly and respectful:

“That is all true, Edmund; but the question is, How had you better begin this battle for fortune you are so anxious to win? Had you better stay with us, and advance surely, if slowly, or risk an encounter with the world of business while you are yet so young and inexperienced? You know, from your father's stories of the sea, that a young captain sometimes runs great risks, with a ship in his command, for the purpose of making a quick voyage; and, in so doing, often loses all, even reputation; while the old and experienced commanders run but few, if any, risks, and almost always reach their destination in safety, and with honor.”

“Yes, sir; I am sure you are right,” said Edmund; “but I do not aspire to the command of a *ship* right away; but I thought I would begin to learn how to command one, by running a little craft of my own—a sort of a little schooner—close to the shore, and only venturing out to sea when I felt I was sufficiently skillful in command, and well provisioned, too.”

Mr. Gould smiled, and said:

“It is easy to see, Edmund, that you are the son of an old seaman; not only from your illustration, but that you inherit a touch of his daring enterprise and self-reliance, all which I like, when

tempered with good principle and guided by honor, as I feel sure it will be in your case; but tell me, what is your plan?"

Edmund then explained to Mr. Gould that a friend of his, who was a clerk in a drygoods store, was about to be married to his twin sister, and that he had proposed to him a partnership which, with his father's approval, he had accepted; and, in pursuance of this idea, they intended to open a retail dry goods store in Newark, New Jersey. His father, he said, was to furnish him with three thousand dollars, and his intended brother-in-law was to put a like sum in the business.

After some further consultation, Mr. Gould approved of Edmund's project, and shook hands with him warmly, assuring him of his regret at his leaving, and promising him decided help, whenever he should need it, in any way that their firm could be useful.

Edmund's twenty-first birthday came, and soon after was 303 opened, in Newark, a well-stocked retail dry goods store, over the door of which appeared, on a plain but neat sign, the name of the firm, "Allen & Roman." This was in the Spring of the year 1844.

Success seemed to crown the efforts of the young merchants. They kept their credit with all their city business connections, as the insurance men would say at "A No. 1." Their store soon became the most attractive in that old town. Ladies found that they could do full as well, and, many contended, far better, by making their purchases at Allen & Roman's than by going to New York for the purpose, as they had heretofore mostly done. Among their lady customers, happened in two that somehow particularly drew Edmund's attention. They were a mother and daughter. The mother was a tall, large woman, well formed; but had something almost masculine in her manner and tone of voice. At the same time, she was stylish and lady-like, and decidedly good-looking, but rather imperious in her bearing to all around her. The daughter seemed almost the opposite in some respects. She was rather below the average height. Her voice was peculiarly sweet, musical and soft. In figure and face she was surpassingly beautiful. She seemed to love to please every one of both sexes, but particularly, perhaps, gentlemen. This Mrs. Morehouse was the wife of a retired lawyer and now silent partner in a large carriage manufactory in his native town, Newark.

The Morehouses lived in very handsome style in a beautiful mansion in the outskirts of the town. Willard S. Morehouse was a man of sterling good sense and of remarkably fine judgment. He was an affectionate husband and a fond, devoted father. They had four children, all yet at school, except Ada, who was now the constant companion of her mother. Ada had heard so much, from her lady friends, of Allen & Roman's beautiful stock of goods, that one day she requested her mother to go to the store to look for some articles they wished to purchase. She had heard, also, of the fine, handsome, young merchant who was one of the partners in the firm, but, of course, this had nothing to do with her desire to visit the store. Anyway, if it had, she did not know it, for we are often led by some secret, half-hidden feeling, in our daily walks through life, without our knowing, ourselves, what it is that leads us. Perhaps, if we chose to be watchful, and were determined to know, we would not be deceived as often as we are. But Ada Morehouse 304 saw no particular use in examining into the real cause of her desire to visit this famous dry-goods store, when she proposed it to her mother. She knew she wanted to purchase some articles of dress, and she knew she preferred to look for them at Allen & Roman's, and that was all she cared to know. The mother at once acceded to her wishes. On entering the store, the ladies found attentive, gentlemanly clerks, who seemed most anxious to please and to exhibit their goods to the best advantage. Mrs. Morehouse found what she wanted, and made her purchases. Ada was not, at first, so fortunate. She asked for a particular style of glove, of a peculiar color and shade, intended to match one of her dresses, and the clerk could not find it. That day, Mr. Roman was in the City of New York, making purchases, and Edmund was seated in the office, looking over some accounts. The door of the office was open, so that he could hear what was said in the store, if he chose to give it his attention. Mrs. Morehouse's voice was unnoticed by him, except that he thought it sounded imperious and loud, but it in no way disturbed him at his work. But, now he started, as his ear caught the sound of the sweetest voice he had ever heard. What was it that was so peculiar about it? What was in it that so aroused him? He asked himself those very questions over and over for days afterwards, but he could not satisfy himself with an answer. Certain it is that it vibrated on some nerve of his system never before disturbed, and certain it is that it produced a sweet feeling of pleasure never before felt by him. He arose from his seat and walked into the store. As he entered, Ada was yet speaking, and he saw that it was her voice that so attracted him. Taking his clerk's place, he opened

box after box of gloves, but none exactly suited. This led naturally to a conversation on gloves, which seemed wonderfully interesting to both. Edmund held Ada's eyes on his own handsome face while he gave her a full and very interesting description of the great glove manufactories of France. Neither Edmund nor Ada, two hours before, would have believed that it was possible for them to be much interested in glove-making, yet now it seemed to be of absorbing interest. On, on, they talked, turning box after box of gloves over and over, mixing all sorts together, to the horror of the clerks, who were looking on, and yet never finding the right pair. Mrs. Morehouse began to grow impatient, and said:

“Ada, dear, will you never get through with those gloves?”

305

“Yes, dear mother, in a moment.”

Just then Edmund held up a pair, saying:

“This is a beautiful shade of blue, and, I think, very nearly what you want.”

“Well,” said Ada, “on *your* recommendation, I will take it.”

She said this with the slightest possible emphasis on “your,” and, for an instant only, their eyes met, and Edmund thought a slight blush heightened the color of Ada's cheek, and then there was a queer feeling about his own heart he never felt before. It was not pain, or, if it was pain, it made him feel happy.

Mrs. Morehouse had made several purchases, so that Edmund sent the errand boy home with the ladies to take the parcel. That evening, Mrs. Morehouse observed that Ada was very thoughtful, and, half divining the cause, said to her:

“Why, Ada, what is the matter with you? Why is your piano shut down at this hour, and why so thoughtful, my child?”

“Mother, dear, I do not feel exactly well to-night, and, with your permission, I will retire for the night, for I am, beside, somewhat tired and weary.”

So saying, Ada left for her own room. As she entered it, she threw herself into a softly cushioned rocking-chair, and there sat motionless for a long hour, in deep thought. Once she murmured, half audibly:

“They will say he is only a struggling, retail storekeeper, the son of a farmer and all that sort of stuff. What if he is; they will have to admit he is a fine, manly-looking fellow, and successful, too, in his business. For my part, I hate the sight of those rich men who come home with father, to see me. They are old enough to be my father; and I despise still more those rich men's sons. They are mostly dissipated, worthless fellows, and I can see that father himself does not love them. There are exceptions, of course, but they are mighty few.”

Ada again fell into a brown study. Then, suddenly arousing herself, she began her preparations for the night, and, as she did so, she murmured:

“Well, when next I see him, I may not like him half so well; so I will dismiss those foolish thoughts. They annoy me, too, for he is the first man that ever bothered me in this way.”

But, that night, Ada was again sorting gloves in dreams. When Ada left her mother, in the parlor, Mrs. Morehouse was waiting for her husband to return from New York, where he had gone that day. She now threw down the paper she had been reading, and, drawing her easy chair near to the fire, she fixed herself in the most comfortable position and fell into deep thought. After awhile she said aloud:

“I do believe the child is half caught at last. It is strange, too, by just a retail drygoods dealer. Well, I do not half blame her; those rich old fellows her father keeps bringing here are enough to disgust her. What does a handsome young girl like Ada want with them? And then, as to those impudent, idle, worthless, rich young men, who come here, if there was not another man in creation, I would not let one of them have her. They have no recommendation but their wealth, which they are sure to

get rid of, and, if they do retain it, they use it in such a manner that it is, in fact, a curse to them. No, I will speak to Willard on this subject; now that our children are beginning to mix with the world, we had better encourage the acquaintance of the sort of young men and girls, too, for there are our sons to be considered, we would be satisfied with for members of our family. Those rich girls who think of nothing but dress and fashion, and society, and do not know the first thing about house-keeping, I have an utter contempt for. What sort of wives would they make? They say we are rich, and I suppose we are, but I would be ashamed if I had brought up my daughter in that sort of way.”

Mrs. Morehouse seemed again to sink into thought. Then, after a little time, she spoke aloud:

“If Willard thinks as I do, I will never again invite to our house those rich young scapegraces, and Miss Dollies of girls, even if their fathers are rich. I will extend our acquaintance among the good and worthy, whether rich or poor. Yes; and then when we give a party, I will only invite such to it, no matter whom it hurts; for what is the use of being rich, if we can not do as we like, and use our riches to encourage the good and virtuous, whether rich or poor?”

Just then, Mr. Morehouse arrived and it may safely be set down that a man of his sense fully endorsed his wife's views, and authorized her to proceed in society matters, in the future, as she herself had planned to do.

CHAPTER III.

A TROUBLESOME COLUMN OF FIGURES.

When Mrs. Morehouse and Ada left the store, Edmund went back to his accounts. He had some long lines of figures to add up. He commenced his work with seven and nine are sixteen, and five are twenty-one, and eight and eight and eight. Then, looking vacant, he said:

“What dazzling eyes! Oh! what am I thinking of? Let me see where I was; oh, yes, here it is. Seven and nine are sixteen and five are twenty-one, and eight, yes, and eight. I never heard such a voice; it was all music. Why, I will never get this outrageous account added up; I cannot put it off either,

so here it goes, and now I will attend to it. Seven and nine are sixteen, and five are twenty-one, and eight would be just twenty-nine, and six, and six, and six—what a smile she had! I could have just stood there all day looking at her; and that dark, brown hair, I believe she just fixed it up so as to set a fellow crazy. Well, what am I about? I believe I *am* crazy. Now, I must attend to my accounts. What in the world is that girl to me?”

He then went on, very loud, and with a voice of strong determination:

“Seven and nine are sixteen, and five are twenty-one, and eight (with a yet louder voice) are twenty-nine, and six are thirty-five, and nine, and nine, and nine—I think she did blush just a little, when she took that pair I recommended to her, and I wish she did not,” he continued angrily, “for I believe that girl has just put me out of my head. Where in the mischief was I in my accounts? Well, now, no more of this fooling, or Roman will be here before I get this account added up. Seven and nine are sixteen, and five are twenty-one, and eight are twenty-nine, and six are thirty-five, and nine are forty-four, and three are forty-seven, and seven, and seven—I saw her foot as she went out of the door, and I know she does not wear over 308 a two or two-and-a-half shoe. Her hand, too, was a model of beauty. What, in the name of mercy, am I about! I may as well give up those accounts.”

Just then he thought he heard suppressed laughter behind him, and, turning quickly around, there stood his sister, Mrs. Roman, who now gave way, unrestrained, to a fit of merry laughter.

“Why, Edmund,” she said, “what has befallen you? Who is this Venus that has so upset your accounts?”

Edmund looked confounded, but, trying to recover himself, said:

“Alice, how long have you been there?”

“Since you began to try to add up that line of figures, and you *did* make *sad* work of it. It was as good as a play to hear you.”

Then she laughed again, and, throwing herself into a chair near him, she began:

“Seven and nine are sixteen; I shall never forget that anyway; and so she has dazzling eyes, dark, brown hair, a bewitching smile, a number two foot, and model hands. To tell you the truth, brother Edmund, I am glad you are caught; but who is she? I want to know.”

“If you did know, sister Alice, you would know more than I do.”

“Nonsense, brother; now, that I know you are caught, you may as well make a confidant of me. I agree to help you if I *approve*,” she added, with emphasis.

“Alice, you are too bad. How did you know all that about her eyes, hair, hands and foot? I will admit that it is all true, but how did you know it?”

“I read your thoughts, brother Edmund, that is all. Was not I standing behind your chair while you were blundering over those figures, and mixing them up with the praises of the sweetheart you have found somewhere?”

“Well, Alice, you know I never keep anything from you, and if there was anything in particular to tell in this matter I would not sleep until I had a talk with you about it; but, in truth, there is nothing.”

Edmund then went on to tell his sister of his two lady customers, and concluded:

“I will just acknowledge to you that I cannot account for my 309 taking so much notice of this lady. I never saw her before. I do not even know who she is, or what her name is, but that I heard her mother call her Ada.”

“Not a bad name,” said Alice. “Where is the boy who took the goods home? Call him in, Edmund.”

The boy appeared, and Edmund questioned him as to where the ladies he went with lived. The boy then described their residence as a beautiful house, surrounded by grounds, with flowers and

shrubbery, beautifully kept. “The ladies,” said the boy, “wanted to take the parcel from me at the garden gate, but I knew, sir,” he continued, with a half-cunning smile on his face, “that you wanted to know who that young lady was, so I refused to let them, and walked up to the door, and saw on the silver door-plate the name of ‘Willard S. Morehouse.’”

“That is all right, Tom; you are a good boy, but what put it into your head that I wanted to know the name of that young lady, as you say?”

“I do not know, sir; but you looked so kind of sorry when she left the store.”

“Go, go, Tom, and don't mind how I look in future, but attend to your own business.”

As the boy left, Edmund could not help joining his sister in a hearty laugh.

“That is a good boy,” said he, “but he is as cunning as a pet fox, and will get himself into a scrape some day watching other people's business, instead of attending to his own.”

“Now,” said Alice, “you know who she is; that is one satisfaction; she is Miss Ada Morehouse; I know her father is rich, but they are a sort of haughty, distant people. I know something of them through an old schoolmate of mine, Sarah Williams, who is Mrs. Morehouse's niece. She was married, you recollect, the same day I was.”

“Yes, dear Alice, I recollect, but do not trouble yourself any more about the girl, for the last thing I will ever do is to go after a rich wife.”

“But, if a girl is all right in every other way, would you refuse to love her just because she happened to be rich, or have rich parents, as in this case?”

“No; not exactly that; but I will avoid all such girls, if I can; for the girl herself and her friends will be sure to think your attentions have a mercenary object in view, and there are plenty of nice, well-educated girls to choose from, who have not a dollar to quarrel about.”

“Well,” said Alice, “I will not argue with you, Edmund, for there may be something in what you say, and, if you get so that you can add up your accounts correctly, and not mix up Miss Ada Morehouse's praises with them, it is all well.”

“Yes, dear sister, I will think no more of this foolish fancy, and I may never see her again; but I do say, Alice, she is one of the most charming girls I ever saw. I wish you knew her, Alice, just to see if you would agree with me. I have dismissed the whole matter from my mind, so please do not let Alfred know anything of it, or he would bother me, when, the fact is, I think no more about the girl. Strange you never heard of her before, Alice. Her voice is harmony and music itself; I started when first I heard it. Why, said I to myself, that sounds like what I would fancy was the voice of an angel.”

“I see,” said Alice, with a merry look beaming in her eye, “that you have wholly, as you say, Edmund, dismissed the young lady from your mind.”

“Yes, wholly, I assure you, sister; I have something else to do than running after any girl, and particularly a rich girl, whose parents would turn up their proud noses at the bare thought of getting a retail drygoods man for their daughter's husband. No, I have, as we talk here, almost forgotten that I ever saw the girl. What drew my attention so particularly to her, for the few moments I did think of her, was her hand; I do wish you could have seen it. I always thought you had a beautiful hand, and that mother's hand was beautiful; but, Alice, I do wish you could have seen hers while she was trying on the gloves; such a model in shape, such delicacy of tinge of color! Yes, I wish, sister, you could have seen it just as a matter of curiosity, you know. Well, as I said, I have dismissed the whole subject from my thoughts. I only wish you could have seen her figure and form; they were faultless in every particular.”

“Edmund,” said his sister, laughing outright, and laying her hand on his shoulder, “don't you see, for mercy's sake, that you are half out of your head about this girl?”

“Why, Alice, I am surprised at you. Did I not tell you just now that I had dismissed all thoughts of her, and was going to say no more about her?”

“Yes; but you continue to talk of her.”

311

“Oh, well, that was just for your satisfaction, and to let you know how really beautiful she is; but mind, you are not to tell your husband, and I am to think of her no more.”

“Well, we shall see how that turns out, brother Edmund,” said Alice, as she arose to meet her husband, who was then just entering the store on his return from New York.

Alice now took her husband's arm, who was going to accompany her home; and, as she did so, turned to her brother, and said:

“Edmund, when you come to dinner, the first thing I will ask you is, if you have that line of figures added up yet, and if you are sure that seven and nine make sixteen.”

Edmund shook his head significantly, and laid his finger across his lips in token that he plead for silence. Of course, the first thing Mrs. Roman did was to tell her husband all about Edmund and Ada Morehouse, concluding with “Now, Alfred, do not pretend to know a word of all this, for Edmund begged of me not to tell you; just as if it was possible for a married woman to keep such things from her husband.”

Alice said this with a tone of pity for her brother's ignorance.

“Of course, my love,” said Alfred; “it would be very wrong to keep anything from me.”

“O, yes; you say so, dear; but do you tell me *everything*?” laying emphasis on *every*.

“Why, of course, love, everything it is proper for me to tell.”

“Then you do keep some things from me, Alfred?” said Alice, sorrowfully.

“Nothing, dear; nothing that is of consequence to you to know do I ever keep from you.”

“Well, that is right, dear Alfred; that is my idea exactly—no secrets between man and wife.”

“Yes, love; a wife should never have a secret that was not to be shared with her husband.”

“Yes,” said Alice, “we agree on that point exactly—as we do in everything; don't we, love?”

“Certainly, my darling wife, we do.” Then he continued: “Now, as to Edmund; I do not know what may be the result, for I never knew him to be so attracted before by any girl. So this may have struck in, as they say; and yet it may glance off, and not be heard of again. We shall see.”

CHAPTER IV.

THE POOR WIDOW—MR. MOREHOUSE AND EDMUND.

When Edmund Allen appeared for dinner at his sister's house, where he boarded, Alice saw that he was making efforts to appear, as he always did, cheerful and happy. He made a failure of it, however; and Alice remarked that his great pet, the baby, remained almost unnoticed. All that night Edmund was turning box after box of gloves over in his dreams. When he awoke the next morning, the first thing he said was:

“Well, confound those gloves. I am so glad I have dismissed all thoughts of that girl from my mind. It would just have unfitted me for business, if I had allowed my head to run on thinking of her.”

Strange to tell, Edmund happened, by accident, of course, to walk by Mr. Morehouse's residence that evening, the next evening, and the next. On the third evening of this accidental walk, he met Miss Morehouse, with some lady friend, returning from a walk. Just then, Miss Morehouse dropped her handkerchief, by accident, of course, and walked on, not observing it. In an instant

Edmund picked it up, and, raising his hat, presented it to her with a smile, in which there was a half-recognition.

“Thank you, Mr. Allen,” said Ada, with what was to poor Edmund a bewitching manner.

In a moment the ladies were out of sight. Edmund now walked on fast, and apparently wrapped in some exciting thought.

“How well my name sounded when she spoke it,” he said, half aloud. “What if I could hear her call me Edmund? I would just like to hear how it would sound when spoken by her. I never liked the name; but I do believe I would be satisfied with it forever afterwards if I once heard it spoken by her.”

In a few days after this accidental meeting, Ada and her cousin, Mrs. Eaton, who had been Alice's schoolmate, called at Allen & Roman's, and made a good many purchases for the 313 benefit of a poor widow and children, who were destitute of clothes.

Edmund, unasked, subscribed liberally himself, and every one in the store gave something. Then he helped the ladies in making the selections, for he had now a sort of joint interest in the matter, and found himself, before he knew it, in most charming, half confidential talks with Miss Morehouse. An hour passed, and yet the widow's clothes were not half selected. Happy widow! you will be well paid for the happiness your necessities bring two young, sympathetic hearts; for while their eyes, their thoughts, are all for each other, they purchase and bestow on you without limit.

That evening, after dinner, Edmund found himself alone with his sister. He asked her to play and sing for him. She threw open her piano, and sang and played the songs and pieces he asked for. Suddenly she turned to him with: “Why, Edmund, do you ask for all those sad and plaintive songs? What is the matter with you, my brother?” And as she spoke a smile played on her handsome face. Then she added: “How much are seven and nine?”

Edmund let his head drop on his hand while his arm rested on the piano, and did not at once speak. Then he said, in a low voice:

“Alice, dear sister, do not laugh at me; but help me. You know you said you would.”

“And so I will, my darling brother,” she said, as she leaned over and kissed his cheek; “so let us be serious, and tell me all, so that I will know what to do.”

“There is little to tell, dear sister, but that I cannot stop thinking, day or night, of Ada Morehouse.”

“Have you seen her since?”

“Only twice; once, by accident, near her house, and to-day, in our store.”

“Did you speak when you met her by this accident, as you call it?” And here again a smile beamed on Alice's face.

Edmund looked at her, reproachfully, and said:

“It was quite an accident, I assure you. Yes; I picked up her handkerchief, and when I handed it to her she thanked me by name, in the sweetest voice.”

“Was she friendly, to-day, in her manner to you?”

“She was sweetness itself, Alice; but I cannot say that it was anything particular to me, for I believe she cannot be anything else to any one. For my part, while she was in the store, I neither saw nor heard any one else, and, Alice, once or twice she stood very near me and whispered in my ear something about the widow's necessities, in the most confidential way. How it was I do not know, but I felt happier at that moment than I ever did in my life.”

“Enough,” said Alice; “I see the case plainly, brother; and there is only one cure for it.”

“And what is that, sister?”

“That you go to work and convince her that you truly love her, and then that you ask her to marry you. If she accepts you, you can then love her at your leisure all your life long. If she rejects you—”

“Well,” interrupted Edmund, “exactly; if she rejects me, what then?”

“Why, brother dear, you will have to do as other men have done before you—get over your first love and find another angel who will value and return what the first rejects.”

“Sister Alice, I see you don't understand this case, for if you did you would know that if Ada Morehouse refuses to love me, I will die an old bachelor, as sure as you and I sit here.”

“Well, brother, that is all right. I have no wish to dispute your belief in that respect for the present. Now, what you want is to get better acquainted with Miss Morehouse, and to give her a better opportunity of knowing you; so I will turn the matter over in my mind and see what can be done.”

“Good night, sister,” said Edmund, kissing her. “I feel ever so much happier since I told you all.”

“It is, in fact, love on first sight,” murmured Alice after Edmund was gone, “a thing I never believed in before.”

The next day Mrs. Roman called on Mrs. Eaton, her old schoolmate, and invited her to a social lunch, to give them, as she said, a chance to talk over old school days.

Mrs. Eaton said: “Oh, that will be nice; I will go, by all means.”

Then Alice went on to say: “I understand you have a beautiful cousin, a Miss Morehouse. Please get her to come with you; I would so like to know her.”

“I will try; and perhaps my aunt will come, too.”

“Oh, that will be yet more gratifying, I assure you,” said Alice.

315

The next day, at the appointed hour, Alice had a beautiful lunch, and all the ladies she had invited were there, including Ada and her mother. On their return home, both Mrs. Morehouse and Ada pronounced Mrs. Roman a charming lady and one of the sweetest of women. Then followed a lunch at Mrs. Morehouse's; then an evening party of a few friends at Mrs. Eaton's. Mr. and Mrs. Roman were invited, but Mrs. Roman sent an apology to say that she had no escort, as her husband had an engagement for that evening. Then came a note from Mrs. Eaton to ask Mrs. Roman to get her brother to escort her. Edmund did take her, and then for the first time met Ada in private social life. To him she looked more charming than ever. She was all life and wit, and seemed to enjoy herself to the utmost. Some lady friends, who knew that she sang and played beautifully, requested her to give them some music. Just as she was going to take her seat, she addressed Edmund, saying: “Are you fond of music, Mr. Allen?”

“Passionately fond of it,” responded Edmund.

“Then come near me, and ask for what you like best.”

Edmund's heart bounded at this compliment. He took his place near her, but his memory was sadly at fault, and he feared she thought him absolutely stupid, for not one piece of music or song could he bring to his memory to ask for; so, growing desperate at this thought, he resolved to be candid, even at the risk of giving offence; so, stooping as if it were to get her a piece of music, he said, just loud enough for her to hear him: “The truth is, Miss Ada, that when I am near you I know nothing and can remember nothing, but that *I am near you.*”

As quick as thought, her eyes flashed on his face. She thought that perhaps it was an idle compliment, which would have been offensive in so new an acquaintance. But no; her unerring woman's perception told her that what he said he meant, for in his eyes was an honest, truthful expression, that said in answer to her look: “Yes; what I said is from my heart.”

Then, as she looked back on her music, a flush crimsoned her face, and she proceeded for a minute in evident agitation. In another minute, however, she had regained her self-composure and repaid him for his compliment with a sweet smile, and all the evening she was a happy girl, and her dreams that night were of a paradise on earth. Following this party came some weeks of happiness almost unalloyed to Ada and Edmund. Edmund was 316 now a constant and welcome visitor at Mr. Morehouse's. Ada had several suitors besides Edmund, all richer than he, but she discarded them all, one after the other. If Ada's parents had not been rich, Edmund would have long since proposed for her. Thinking over this one day, he resolved to go to her father and have a plain talk with him. Knowing his habits, he knew when to find him in his library. Mr. Morehouse was somewhat surprised at the call, but received him cordially and handed him a chair. Without a word of preface, Edmund went on to say:

“Mr. Morehouse, I came to speak to you of a matter of the utmost importance to me, and shall be perfectly open and candid, and will deem your taking what I say under consideration a great favor.”

“I promise, unreservedly, Mr. Allen, to do that with pleasure.”

“Thank you, Mr. Morehouse; your family have always been kind to me since I was so fortunate as to make their acquaintance, and it cannot, I think, have escaped your notice that Miss Ada's society has been peculiarly attractive to me.”

Mr. Morehouse bowed in assent, and said:

“Mr. Allen, from the turn I see this conversation is likely to take, I would wish, if you have no objection, that Mrs. Morehouse should be present; for, to say truth, I have a great reliance on a mother's judgment in these matters, and deem it her right to have the fullest opportunity of judging of them for herself. And then my wife and I, sir, have made it a rule of life to share with each other all responsibilities.”

“No objection, Mr. Morehouse, for it is just what I would wish.”

Mr. Morehouse soon returned with his wife, who saluted Edmund in the kindest manner, and took her seat by her husband, leaning her arm on his chair.

“I have explained, Mr. Allen, to Mrs. Morehouse, the nature of your visit, so you can proceed in what you wish to say. We are all attention, sir.”

“I have just spoken, Mrs. Morehouse, of the kindness and courtesy you have all shown me since I had the good fortune of your acquaintance; and I was going to explain that it was far from me to desire to intrude, in an unwished-for way, on the notice of your family; but I come here to acknowledge to you, plainly and candidly, as it becomes a man of honor to do, 317 that Miss Ada has become the object of my heart's truest love. I have not told her so, nor spoken to her of such feelings, but I am most desirous of doing so, if I can get your approval and consent. From the moment I first got acquainted with her I felt her extraordinary power over me. I tried to avoid her, and not to think of her, because I saw that you had a right to look higher than one in my position for the husband of your daughter, and such a daughter as I saw her to be. But in this I utterly failed.”

Pausing for an instant, he continued, without a shadow of diffidence, but with an earnest voice, that trembled with deep feeling and evident emotion:

“So, as bold as the proposition may seem to you, I come to seek your consent to ask her for her hand in marriage. I would rather die than do this, if I did not feel sure that, under *God*, her happiness would be safe in my hands. I am not rich, it is true; but I propose to satisfy you that I am doing a good, prosperous business, which will afford me ample means of supporting a family in all the comforts, if not the luxuries, of life. And, if I am successful in this suit, I want it distinctly understood that I neither look for nor will I accept any pecuniary endowment with the rich treasure of your daughter's hand. I come to you, friends, as your kindness to me gives me the right to style you, not rich, but with an honorable, untarnished name, a brave heart to encounter the vicissitudes of life, and with a vow of fidelity and truth, that I trust in *God* will remain unbroken till life's close, to ever promote the happiness and shield and protect her whose hand I seek here to-day.”

Happy mother! happy parents both! As you sit there you cannot but estimate the character of the youth before you at its true, its priceless value; and, as you do so, you feel intensely proud and happy that he so values her who is so near and dear to you. Yes, mother and father, this homage this true man yields to the result of your labors almost repays you for all that labor, care and anxiety in all the past for baby, child and girl.

“Thank you, Mr. Allen,” responded Mr. Morehouse, “for your plain and outspoken statement of your wishes; and I must also acknowledge, which I do with great pleasure, that your way of proceeding is entirely unexceptionable, and in keeping with what I had reasonably to expect from a member of the family to which you belong. I will be equally candid and open with 318 yourself, and say to you that your feelings towards our daughter have not been unobserved, either by Mrs. Morehouse or myself, and that, under these circumstances, we thought a conversation, such as we are now having, not unlikely to occur. In this view I thought it best for all parties interested that I should make such inquiries as would enable us to judge of what should be the result of any such application as you have this morning made. In pursuance of this conceived duty, I have made full and minute inquiries. I found, in the first place, that your father, Captain Allen, was an old client of mine—a man of the highest honor and integrity, whom I am proud to class as a personal friend. In the next place, I found your school and academical record untarnished by one mean act. Then I found your old employers, Gould, Fox & Co., of New York, enthusiastic in your praise. Further on, I find all your New York business connections regard you as a valuable customer and a man of strict honor. Sir, I want no more, and Mrs. Morehouse agrees with me.”

As he said this, he turned his head towards his wife, and she promptly said:

“Perfectly. You have our full consent to speak to our daughter, and seek her consent to your proposal.”

Edmund was on the point of jumping from his chair to extend his hand, in gratitude and thanks, when Mr. Morehouse motioned him to let him proceed further; so Edmund remained in his chair, now like a fettered bird, to hear what Mr. Morehouse wished to add.

“You referred to the fact that you were not rich, and to your struggling position, and that you would not receive any money endowment with your wife. As to your not being rich, there were times, perhaps, when I built castles in the air as to riches for my daughter; but they were but air castles, not founded on good judgment, and have faded away. In you, sir, I feel, if you are the choice of our child, our views for her will be fully satisfied. As to the other point, we wish to reserve to ourselves the right to give, as well as not to give, to any of our children, married as well as single; and this I wish understood distinctly. God has intrusted me with considerable of this world's wealth. I shall hold what I do not use of it in trust for my children; and our intention is, as long as either of us live, not to lop off any of the branches of the parent oak, but to leave all its spreading shade as a common shelter for all our family, and 319 their families—a harbor to fly to if the world frowns on any of them, where they will be sure of a home and a rest that will refresh and protect them.”

“Mr. and Mrs. Morehouse, how can I thank you? I have no words to do it.”

“Never mind, never mind, Edmund,” exclaimed Mrs. Morehouse, tears streaming down her cheeks; “I will not call you Mr. Allen any more; we understand all that you would say. Come this evening and see Ada, and we both wish you success, with all our hearts. She will be home from New York this afternoon some time, and, of course, we will say nothing to her of your visit. You shall tell her all yourself.”

“Thank you, dear Mrs. Morehouse, a thousand times thank you both.” And, shaking hands, he was out of sight in a moment.

CHAPTER V.

THE SONG—THE PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE.

As Edmund Allen walked quickly towards his sister's house, the world appeared a bright paradise spread out before him, without a cloud to cast one shadow on it. Yet, now he almost stops walking, and, half-aloud, exclaimed:

“What if I should have totally mistaken Ada's feelings towards me—but no,” he said, cheerfully, “I cannot but believe that such eyes as hers always reflect truly the feelings of the heart.”

“Alice, who knew her brother's mission that morning, was watching for his return, and, as she saw him coming, threw open the door to receive him. Without speaking, the moment he entered she caught his hand, and, looking up into his face, exclaimed:

“Oh, it is all right; you are accepted, my darling brother; I wish you joy a thousand times over.”

“No, Alice, not exactly; I have only seen Mr. and Mrs. Morehouse. Their reception was all that I could ask, and more, in fact, than I could expect. I have their consent to see Ada this evening, and their good wishes for my success with her.”

“Oh, then, I consider it as good as settled, my dear brother. Did you tell them your personal history?”

“Yes; and I found out that father is an old acquaintance and friend of Mr. Morehouse, and he speaks of him in the highest terms.”

“Oh, then, all is right, dear Edmund, and I know you have nothing to fear as to your interview with Ada to-night.”

“Well, dear sister, I cannot help feeling confident myself, and, therefore, very happy.”

When Ada returned from New York, that afternoon, she found her father and mother absent. They were not to be back, Mary, the hired girl, said, until nine o'clock in the evening.

321

Then Mary busied herself in helping Ada to take off and put away her things and change her walking dress. As she did so she said, in an assumed careless tone:

“I believe Mr. Allen is going, or has gone, on some long journey.”

“What makes you think so, Mary?” said Ada, looking up quickly, with a blush spreading over her face, and then turning very pale.

As Mary saw this she turned away to hide a smile, and said to herself: “I thought it was so.” Then she answered aloud:

“Oh, I don't know, Miss Ada; but he was here this morning, and had a long talk with your father and mother in the library, and when he was going away they both shook hands with him, and I heard your father say ‘God bless you, sir; I wish you may prosper, with all my heart,’ and I heard your mother say ‘Good-bye, we both wish you success with all our hearts.’”

Ada stood as if transfixed to the spot, for a minute, in astonishment and evident agitation. Then, partly recovering herself, she tried to assume a calm voice, and said:

“That will do, Mary; I am so tired I believe I will rest here on the sofa until tea time.”

Mary understood her, and left the room. But did Ada rest on the sofa? No such thing. As the door closed she exclaimed, half-aloud:

“What in the world does this mean! Can he, in fact, be going away, and is he gone, or will he go and not see me! Oh, that would be so mean of him; I cannot believe it.”

Then, throwing herself into a chair, she leaned her head forward on her dressing-table, and, covering her face with her handkerchief, she murmured to herself:

“So, then, my dream of happiness is all over;” but, with a start, she seemed to recover herself, and continued: “He looks so true and earnest when his eyes meet mine, that I cannot believe that anything would make him leave without seeing me. Oh, no,” she continued, “he will be here this very evening to tell me why he has to go; I know he will, and I must be ready to receive him.”

Seeming now to have full faith in this idea, she arose, bathed her face and made her toilet with uncommon care, which did not escape Mary's notice when Ada appeared at the tea-table. Time now

seemed intolerably slow in passing. At length she hears a 322 step; she knows it well; it is his, and, as he rings the bell, she seats herself at the piano, so as to appear at her ease. To compliment him she fancied she was about to part with for a long time, she commenced to sing one of his favorite songs. "The poor fellow," she said to herself, "now that he has to go away, I don't care if he does know that I am thinking of him."

Edmund's heart bounded as he recognized his favorite song.

"Bless her darling little heart," said he: "that is a good omen." As the girl threw open the parlor door to admit him, the song was not yet finished, but Ada arose to meet him, and extended her hand in her usual cordial manner. As he took it he retained it for a moment, saying:

"Let me lead you back to the piano to finish that song, for as much as I always admired it, it never seemed so sweet to me before."

"With great pleasure," said Ada, seating herself again.

Somehow she outdid herself in that song. Never before did she throw such soul and feeling into it as now. As she arose, Edmund's eyes were beaming on her with delight and admiration. He offered her his arm, and she took it mechanically. He led her to a little *tete-a-tete* sofa in the recess of the bay window, saying, as he did so:

"I have something to say to you, Miss Ada, that concerns me very much. Will you sit with me here and let me tell you what it is?"

"Certainly, Mr. Allen," she said, taking her seat by him, and looking up into his face, she continued, with a slight tremor in her voice, "you do not look well, Mr. Allen; is there anything the matter?"

"Nothing whatever," he said, "but the natural anxiety of one starting, as it were, on a long journey, who feels miserable at the idea that he may be all alone in all its vicissitudes and trials; but, you, dear Miss Ada, are very pale; I fear you are not well."

“Oh, perfectly, Mr. Allen; but where are you going, and why do you go on this journey?”

As Ada spoke, her voice was suppressed and yet more tremulous.

“I will explain,” said Edmund; “but I was first going to ask you if, as a great favor, you would leave off that cold formula, *Mr. Allen*, and call me Edmund, when we are here just by ourselves, you know. You do not know how sweet to me my name would sound if spoken by you.”

323

“But you call me *Miss Ada*,” whispered Ada.

“Then I may call you Ada and you will call me Edmund?”

Ada hesitated. “Just when we are here alone,” pleaded Edmund in the same soft voice.

A low but decided “Yes,” followed from Ada.

“I would like to go yet further,” said Edmund, his face now beaming with happiness, and ask you to let me preface your name with what my heart dictates and calls for.”

Ada hesitated, and Edmund again pleaded: “Just when we are here alone, you know.”

As he said this, he took her unresisting hand in his.

Ada, now scarlet, then pale, by a great effort, commanded just breath enough to whisper:

“What do you want to call me?”

Edmund leaned over close to her and, in a voice, clear but thrilling with intensity of feeling, said:

“I want to call you, while we are here alone, and forever more, while life lasts, my darling, my own Ada.”

Now, each of my young readers must, to their own satisfaction, conclude in imagination this happy scene between Edmund and Ada, which is evidently going to cause two young, true hearts to go forth as one, in the battle of life. It was 10 o'clock when Mr. and Mrs. Morehouse returned. As they opened the parlor doors, Edmund and Ada stood before them, arm in arm. In an instant, Ada's arms were around her father's neck and then her mother's, and she whispered in her mother's ear as she kissed her:

“Oh mother! I am so happy.”

Then, taking one look at Edmund, she glided off to her own room, to fancy and dream that all the world was as happy as she was.

The father and mother now congratulated Edmund most heartily, and Mrs. Morehouse kissed his cheek and called him her “dear son, Edmund.”

Alice and Alfred Roman waited up for Edmund's return. As he entered their house, Alice started to her feet and cried out:

“All right, is it, Edmund?” And he responded:

“All right, sister dear.”

Then she flew to him and embraced him and kissed him over and over, saying:

“Thank *God* for your happiness, my darling brother, you deserve it all.”

324

“My loving sister thinks so, anyway,” said Edmund. As for Alfred, he called for three cheers, which he gave himself, and then shook Edmund by both hands.

“Oh, Edmund! Alfred and I have just planned,” said Alice, “that you are to take me to see father and mother to-morrow, to talk over everything with them. They will be so happy, it will do us good to see them.”

“With all my heart, dear Alice. It is just what I would wish to do;” and so it was settled.

“Well,” said Alice, “I will never again disbelieve in love at first sight. I see now it does happen *sometimes*. Well, truly, matches are made in heaven.”

Now came a time of the highest enjoyment and happiness to all the relations of the young people on both sides. An interchange of visits and calls was the order of the day. Congratulations poured in on all sides, and never was a happier engagement. The wedding day was fixed and was near at hand. It came, and the nuptials took place at the house of the bride's father. After the ceremony, all partook of Mrs. Morehouse's elegantly prepared breakfast, after which Edmund and Ada set out for a trip to the Falls of Niagara; then across Lake Ontario and down the river St. Lawrence to Quebec, and back home by Lake Champlain, Saratoga and the Hudson river. When they reached home, Ada was presented by her father with a deed of a handsome, unostentatious residence, all handsomely furnished. In the selection and arrangement of the furniture, Alice and Mrs. Eaton had helped Mrs. Morehouse. A little party was assembled at the residence to welcome the owners home, and most heartily did they do so. Time ran on, and in its course came two beautiful children to make the house yet more cheerful and joyous. Not a cloud, not a shadow had so far ever crossed the path of life of this young couple. Innocent and pure in their love, with enough of worldly goods to meet their daily wants, they were more happy than is the prince on his throne. Oh, California! when you came with your untold treasure of gold, which was so evidently sent by Providence to aid this great republic in its impending danger and struggle for life with its own mad children, why was it a part of your mission to destroy a happy home, such a paradise on earth as this of Edmund and Ada's? Yet so it seemed.

CHAPTER VI.

NEWS FROM CALIFORNIA—A TERRIBLE DREAM.

One day in November, 1848, Edmund Allen came home as gay and light-hearted as usual. Ada met him with a bright smile and her usual kiss of welcome. The streets that day were muddy, so Edmund announced his intention to change his boots for slippers. Little Alice, their eldest, ran towards her father, calling, “Pa, *me* slippers,” and in her tiny hands she bore the slippers.

He expresses his thanks to her, praises her, and tells her she is his “little woman,” his “pet,” and that she had earned a dozen kisses from him. Then she holds up her little cherry lips to get her pay, and oh! how sweet to him was it to pay that debt! Then, elated with her success, she drags his muddy boots towards the kitchen along the carpet. Then her mother calls out: “Oh, Alice dear! dirty ma's carpet.”

“No, ma; I am clean Pa's boots.”

Then Edmund catches her up, puts her on his shoulder, then makes her feet walk on the wall, and tells her she is a fly. Then he pretends to eat her up, while he kisses her all over. Then Ada is jealous; she says that he has forgotten the baby. So he takes the baby, and hugs and kisses the little darling until Ada begs him to sit down to dinner or “Everything will be cold,” she says.

At dinner Edmund tells his wife that he has the New York *Herald* in his pocket, giving an account of the discovery of gold at Sutter's Fort, on the American River, in California.

“I will read it for you,” he says, “after dinner, if you would like to hear it, as I have not yet read it myself, but Alfred was telling me about it.”

“Yes, dear; I would like very much to hear it; but wait until the children are in bed.”

So, dinner over, and the little ones snug in bed, Ada takes 326 her work out—it is some little article of dress for the baby—and, drawing her chair closer to where her husband sits, she tells him she is “all ready.”

Edmund leans over and kisses her, then draws out the *Herald*, and reads aloud all the accounts it gave of the wonderful discovery of gold in California, as they first reached New York.

“I wonder,” said Ada, as he concluded, “if these accounts are to be relied on?”

“Well, in the main facts, I suppose they are. It is truly wonderful,” said Edmund.

He laid the paper down, and walked up and down the room, as if in thought. Then he stopped short, and, seeming to throw the thoughts, whatever they may have been, from him, he said: “Come, dear wife, lay down your work, and sing for me.”

“Certainly, my dear husband, I will, for I do not like to see you thinking of business at home in the evening. You know it is against both our ideas.”

“Yes, darling; you are right. There is, as you intimate, a time for all things, and this is always an hour for enjoyment; so away with thoughts of business, and of gold, too.”

Edmund opened the piano for Ada, and, seating himself by her, as was his habit, called for his favorite songs and pieces of music. As Ada concluded, and was closing down the piano, Edmund said:

“I wish I had not read those accounts of gold in California to-night. It has somehow disturbed me, and made me feel disagreeable.”

“Strange,” said Ada, “it has had the same effect on me. The feeling is undefined, and I would not have noticed it if you had not.”

“How very strange,” added Edmund, “that it had the same effect on us both. Well, it is said, you know, that the Old Boy is always glad when gold is plenty. Perhaps he is going to try to reach us through it.”

“God forbid,” said Ada, fervently, “that he should succeed in doing so.”

“God forbid, my darling wife,” responded Edmund, in the same tone of voice.

As they knelt together that night in prayer, as was their wont to do, Edmund's voice seemed to Ada more than usually deep and earnest as he asked for protection against temptations. 327 After prayers Edmund entertained his wife, while preparing to retire, by relating a thrilling incident, told to him that day, of a man and his wife who had an almost miraculous escape from floating ice on the upper Hudson River. This seemed to have drawn all thoughts of California and her gold out of their thoughts, for neither spoke of it again that night. But Ada had a fearful dream as she slept. She saw Edmund, it seemed to her, at the opposite side of a large sea. He was in some great trouble, and was calling on her to come and save him. She ran down to the water's edge, and now the whole sea was covered with floating masses of ice, running close together, and making a fearful crashing and groaning. She thought to cross on the broken masses, but her courage failed her, and she drew back. Again she hears her husband call, and now, to her horror, she sees her children on the ice before her, trying to jump from piece to piece. She no longer hesitates, but flies to save her children; from mass of ice to mass she leaps, as if she had wings, and reaches the children in safety. The baby she catches up in her arms, and, taking little Alice's hand, she continues her terrible flight. Edmund is now plainly in view; closer and closer she gets to him, but as she nears the shore where he stands the ice seems far apart; but, redoubling her efforts, with one more desperate leap she gains the shore, and, with a wild cry, throws herself and the children into Edmund's arms. Her cry, and the last terrible effort awaken her. “Oh!” she exclaims, “Thank God! Thank God! It was all a dream.”

“Why, my darling wife,” said Edmund, who was awakened by her fearful cry, “what is the matter? You are surely not frightened by a dream?”

“Oh, Edmund, it was so fearful, so terrible, so vivid; I can see it all yet. The horrid ice, as it crashed and roared; the danger of the children, and your pitiful call for me to come to you; but, oh, it was all only a dream. Thank God! Thank God!”

While she spoke her teeth chattered, and she was trembling all over, as if in great terror. Edmund got up, lit the lamp, got her a drink, and did everything he could to aid her to regain her composure.

He spoke cheerfully, laughed at her thinking so much of a dream, declared all dreams to be ridiculous, and unworthy of the least attention, and blamed himself for having told her of the frightful escape of the man and his wife, so near bed-time.

328

“I know all you say is, in fact, true, my dear Edmund; but yet I never, in all my life, suffered as I did in that dream.”

“Well, try and think no more of it, dear wife.”

Then Edmund, with tact and skill, drew off her thoughts in another direction, and it was not long before they were both once more fast asleep. No dreams came to disturb Ada any more that night.

Oh, California! was that dream your work? And what does it portend to this virtuous and happy couple?

Now came the California fever so often spoken of. Every new arrival from there heightened the excitement, and the daily papers found profit in fanning the flame, until it became almost a frenzy in the minds of the whole people. The New York *Herald* raked up every possible scrap of information, not only on gold discoveries, but of the climate, soil and capabilities of California and of the whole Pacific coast. Rude maps and diagrams of the geography of the country were appearing every day in the *Herald* and other daily papers.

Now, the rush, which is soon to swell into a mighty tidal-wave, of the young, the middle-aged, and, in many cases, even of the old, begins for California. The journey was a very expensive one, and an outfit besides must be had. This held back thousands who would willingly have gone if they had the means. In some cases families clubbed all their resources to enable one member to go. Many young men, whose character gave them good credit, were assisted to go by well-off friends. Others obtained help by entering into contracts to divide all they made for the first year after reaching California with the party furnishing the required money. This last way was very common for those who could not go themselves, though having ample means, faith in California, and the prospect of

becoming rich there. Such readily risked their money in the venture, against the toil and personal service of some good, enterprising young fellow. When the excitement rose to its height Allen and Roman became infected, but not at first so as to wish to go themselves. They, however, fitted out one or two young men they had faith in, and started them to California, on a contract such as I have mentioned. Indirectly, they helped some others to go and try their luck in the land of promise. To one such case in particular let me draw attention in the next chapter, as the little heroine of the circumstance will figure as an object of interest in our next story, illustrating early life in California.

CHAPTER VII.

MINNIE WAGNER—BROTHER AND SISTER.

Minnie Wagner was a beautiful girl of fifteen; she was handsome in face and faultless in form, with piercing and very pleasant dark, blue eyes; her hair was what might be called fair, but not light; she had a profusion of it, so that when she sometimes, for the amusement of her companions threw it out loose, it swept the ground, and almost enveloped her whole person while she stood erect. In her disposition she was generous and unselfish to a fault. She had one brother, to whom she was devotedly attached.

He was five years older than she was, and resembled her in many traits of his character. Minnie was always his pet, his darling. They shared together all their little trials and crosses, and all their little joys and amusements. Each watched for the other on all occasions, in seeming forgetfulness of themselves. Their parents resided in a small, unpretending cottage which they owned in the outskirts of Newark. In front of it there was a charming little flower garden, inclosed by a pretty fence, painted white. The flowers were well taken care of, and in their selection and management showed excellent taste. Everything in and about the cottage was as neat as neat could be. A glimpse into the little parlor showed a plain rosewood piano. The father, Thomas Wagner, was an architect and house-builder by occupation, and an industrious, good man. The mother was as good a woman as the father was a man, and of no common educational culture. She was Irish by birth, and was of a good family in her own country. The father, and nearly all her immediate relatives, lost their

lives in one of those patriotic uprisings that are so often occurring in Ireland in, thus far, though, let us hope, not always to be, fruitless efforts to rid themselves of the terrible tyranny of English rule. One brother, whose life was spared, and whom she loved devotedly, escaped to France, but 330 Mrs. Wagner had never been able to trace him since. She herself got an opportunity of coming to America with a family emigrating to New York. In that city she supported herself by teaching. Her knowledge of music aided her much; but yet, as an unknown stranger of a nationality and a religion that at that time had to battle against the bitterest and most unfounded prejudices, her task was a weary one, and required all the fortitude natural to those of her race to sustain her in her struggle with adversity.

At length, through the influence of a good lady who had become her friend, she obtained a very advantageous position as teacher in a school in Newark. But it was not long before some narrow-minded parents objected to her on account of her religion. This aroused a bitter controversy among the patrons of the school. The young architect, Thomas Wagner, attended a meeting called to consider the matter. He had never seen the young lady, but his true American chivalry of character, and true American detestation of persecution of any sort, but particularly persecution for opinion's sake, caused him to take part in the discussion, and by his manly, brave defence of the stranger girl shamed all bigotry into silence. Miss Fitzgerald was not present, of course; but, on hearing to whom she owed so much, called on him to express her heart-felt thanks. And so it was that very soon Miss Fitzgerald became Mrs. Thomas Wagner.

Thomas Wagner was known to be skilled in his profession, and, therefore, very seldom out of employment. He supported his family in comfort, and laid by a little each month in the savings bank for a "rainy day." When the son was sixteen the father took him from school, and got him a good position in a hardware store in Newark. Being like most fathers, he preferred his son should choose any mode of life rather than his own.

Minnie went to a day school kept by the good Sisters, and improved rapidly in all her studies, and was instructed in music by her mother.

A few months before the California excitement broke out, Mr. Wagner met with a terrible accident. He fell from a house he was at work on, breaking his leg, and otherwise seriously injuring himself. This was a severe trial to the whole family. Minnie left school to wait on her father's sick-bed; and to her watchful eyes and gentle hand he owed many an easy hour and refreshing sleep. He had been so severely hurt that his recovery was very slow, and it was plain to all that the time was near at hand when they would be forced to draw on the little reserved fund in the savings bank, instead of adding more to what was there. This they were most anxious to avoid, if possible; so Mrs. Wagner proposed they should try to get something to do to make enough to meet their daily expenses until the father should again be able to work.

After a family talk and consultation, it was settled that Mrs. Wagner should, the next day, apply to Allen & Roman for work.

In those days retail drygoods dealers were in the habit of taking orders for shirts from gentlemen wishing them made in a certain style and finish; so Mrs. Wagner was not disappointed. She came home with the material for a dozen shirts. The price allowed for making was small enough, yet reasonable; so that, with Minnie's help, who was a beautiful sewer, she could meet all the family expenses.

Sewing machines were not in vogue in those days; so, as they cared for and watched by the dear sick father, they went on, as it is in the "Song of the Shirt," "Stitch, stitch, stitch," all the day long, mother and daughter. When forced to stop and prepare the frugal meals, they did so with a sense of the greatest relief; for so incessant was the strain on their eyes and fingers all the day, with the never-ending stitch, stitch, stitch, that any work seemed light and a relaxation in comparison.

Until the shirt-making commenced, Minnie would often soothe her father's weary hours by playing for him on her piano; but now he did not ask her for music, except on Sundays, fearful to take the time from the everlasting work on the shirts; so the only enjoyment left was, that in the evenings Walter read aloud for his father, while his mother and sister sewed on and listened.

Now came the California news, and Walter's evening reading was mostly of all its wonders. There is nothing on earth that will fascinate as stories of gold-finding will, when supported by any show of truth. It is not surprising, then, that the Wagner family did what all their neighbors were doing—talked and dreamed of gold. The father, on his sick bed, often exclaimed:

“If I were well, I believe I would try my luck in California.”

332

Then the mother would say: “Well, dear Thomas, do not think of it; for it is not *God's* will that you should do so. Let us be satisfied, and I have no doubt it is for the best, after all.”

“Yes, dear wife, I have no doubt you are right; and I am almost sorry I ever heard of California, as it adds to my regret that I am so helpless here.”

Then Minnie would do or say something to draw her father's mind from sad thoughts:

On the first Sunday that came after the California excitement had risen to its height, the mother went to early church, and Walter and his sister went together to the late service.

Somehow this Sunday they were both very thoughtful, and said but little, which was uncommon; for usually, when together, they never ceased to talk of one subject or another. Several times on their way back Minnie stole an anxious side-glance into her brother's face, but made no remark. When they got home, dinner was ready. It was set on a table, near their father's bed; so they sat down, and Minnie tried to be cheerful and to make them all feel so, for her father's sake. She laughed and talked even more than was common for her. The father felt pleased and thankful to see her so happy, but the keen eye of the mother detected uncommon anxiety beneath this show of good spirits. In the evening the mother went to vespers, leaving the brother and sister alone to take care of their father. There was a nice little fire in their father's room, so Minnie sat near it in a rocking-chair, while Walter read aloud for his father from a book he thought would interest him. The father, with Minnie's aid, settled himself into the most comfortable position, and seemed to be much interested in the reading, but he soon dropped off into a sound sleep. Walter closed the

book, and glanced towards his sister to see if she too slept, for she had been so perfectly still. To his surprise her eyes met his, full of bright-beaming light. She arose from her chair, without speaking, and removed the lamp from the little table near which Walter had been reading, and laid it on the floor just inside her own bedroom door; then, drawing a second chair close to the fire, she beckoned to her brother to come and sit near her. He did so, noiselessly, and whispered earnestly, while he took her hand in his:

“What is it, darling Minnie, that troubled you so all day?”

“Well, nothing, dear Walter, but that I have been watching 333 you for two or three days, and I see your poor heart is in trouble; and so is mine, too, for I know what you are thinking of.”

“What did you think it was, Minnie?”

“Oh, I know; you want to go to California.”

“Who told you, Minnie?”

“Your friend James De Forest was here yesterday to see father.” If Walter could have seen his sister's face as she said this, he would have seen the slightest little blush spread over it. “And, as he was leaving, he beckoned me to follow him into the garden, and then he told me he was going; that he had just got money enough together to take him there, and that he wanted you to go with him, but that you had not quite enough of money, and that you did not know how you could leave us either.”

Here Minnie's voice choked a little, so that Walter did not catch the last part of her whisper, and the only response he made was to clasp her little hands in both of his, with the gentlest pressure. She seemed to recover herself, and went on:

“Now, I want to tell you, my brother, that I approve of your going, and that I can help you. Yes, you look surprised, Walter; but I can help you, though. I am a little girl, but, Walter, I am not, you know, like a rich girl, who has rich parents to do everything for her, and to give her everything

she wants, and has never to think for herself; no, I have to *think, think* and *plan, plan* for myself often and often; so now I feel like a woman grown, and you will see that I will help you, my darling Walter; so you must tell me all your plans, and then let me think and *think* over them to-night.”

“Oh, Minnie, you are so fond of me that you always forget your poor little self, for how could I leave dear mother and you here alone, and poor father, so sick?” Then, dropping his whisper still lower, he continued: “The Doctor told me there was yet great danger in father's case, and, Minnie, if *anything should* happen to him—”

Here his voice failed, and he could not proceed, and for some minutes both brother and sister remained silent, with their hands yet more tightly clasped; and without courage to look at each other, their gaze was on the burning embers before them. Minnie was the first to recover her voice:

“Dear Walter,” she said, “do not let such fears trouble you; see, I am a *woman*, you are four years older, and must be a *man*, as you always have been in fact. In six months you can send us 334 money enough from California to make us all well-off, if not rich. Did you not see that last account, where some one writes to the President—yes, to the President at Washington—that Captain Sutter had Indians at work on the American River, who were earning for him one hundred dollars each and every day?”

“Well, Minnie, grown or not grown, you are a woman, sure enough, and I will talk to you as I would to mother or Uncle John. In the first place, then, supposing we get mother's and father's consent, I have not the necessary money; I am fifty dollars short of what would be necessary to take a second-cabin passage around Cape Horn, which is the cheapest way of going to California, and is the way James De Forest intends to go. The firm owes me fifty dollars, and I met Uncle John yesterday, and he told me he would lend me twenty-five, but how to get the other fifty I am puzzled. I have thought of every one I know of, that I could ask, and of every way and plan to get it, but I was forced to believe that it was out of the question. Oh, Minnie, if I could go, and succeed in sending home money, how happy it would make me! Poor father could then have a little rest, even if he was well, and you and mother need not take any more shirts to make; for, Minnie, that will kill

you both if you have to continue such work much longer. You both look pale and miserable since you have had to work on those shirts, and Uncle John and James De Forest say the same.”

There were tears standing in Minnie's bright, expressive eyes, but she brushed them away, and, patting Walter on the shoulder, while she looked up in his face, she said:

“Now, Walter, dear, I want you to listen to me, for we have not much more time to talk; mother will be home in a few minutes; I have a plan in my head,” placing her hand on her forehead, “to get this fifty dollars; I will not explain it to you just now, but be satisfied it is all right, for I will explain it to mother to-morrow, after I get her consent to let you go to California; so when you come home in the evening I will be able to tell you how it worked; so, now do not worry yourself too much about mother and myself, for it is no use, and we will do our best to take care of our health, and I want you to be strong for your journey, and for your work digging gold in California for us, you know.”

Just then they heard their mother coming, apparently in 335 company with some one, who proved to be Uncle John, their father's brother; so Minnie arose from her seat and, hurriedly kissing her brother, whispered:

“Don't give up, Walter; we will succeed in some way.”

“God bless you, my darling sister,” was all that Walter had time to say as the door opened and their mother and Uncle John entered.

The father awoke from his refreshing sleep, and all had a pleasant talk. Then Uncle John left, and everything was arranged as usual for the night. Minnie retired to her own little room next to her parents, where she slept within call, should her mother need anything during the night. When she was alone she knelt by her bed, and then her night prayers were unusually long and earnest; for, with her whole soul, she prayed for help and courage to go through with what she had undertaken. She arose from her knees, seeming to feel more calm and happy, saying, audibly:

“My plan is this: we make a dollar now over our family expenses every week. I will get mother to let me get up an hour sooner every morning, and to work an hour later every day, and in this way I can earn at least a dollar a week more. That will be two dollars a week saved. Now, to-morrow I will go to Allen & Roman's and offer to make shirts for them at the same price that Rathbone & Simonson pay, which is ten cents a shirt less than Allen & Roman now pay us, if they will advance us \$50 for Walter to go to California, and take it back at two dollars each week until we have it paid. Oh! I am sure they will do it, they are so good and kind; and then they will save so much on the shirts each week. Ten cents is a good deal, and Rathbone & Simonson say that Allen & Roman are fools to pay us so much; but they knew father. It was he who fixed up their store when they began business; and they always praise him, and say he is so honest and good, and they are sorry for his accident; and Mr. Allen told me, the other day, that the shirts we made gave more satisfaction than any shirts they ever had made before, and he told me I looked pale, and that I must not work so hard, and was so kind in his way of talking to me. Oh! I know he will do it. What do I care if I am a little pale? It will only be for this year, and then—oh! yes; and then, when we hear from Walter, and when he sends us home gold that he *himself* has dug in California! Oh! won't that make us all so happy!” 336 And here she clapped her little hands together, while her face lit up with delight at the thought; then she again ran on and murmured:

“To-morrow, yes, *to-morrow*, will be a great day, and I will show Walter that he was right when he said he would talk to me as if I was a woman grown. And I will tell him to ask no questions, but to just go and get ready for California.” Then her voice dropped to the lowest whisper, and, pressing her hands over her eyes, she continued: “Oh, how lonesome I will feel when I see the ship sailing away with poor Walter on board! Then I will cry. Oh, yes, I can't help that; but I will soon get over it; for I will have to attend to my work, and to cheer up dear father and mother.”

Thus Minnie ran on as she undressed, and, after she was in bed, she continued building castles in the air. Over and over she shaped them, till they grew almost real to her heated fancy. Her eyes, instead of closing in sleep, were wide open; fixed, in the darkness, on the happy and beautiful scenes in her coming life which her imagination pictured before her. At length she suddenly seemed

to recollect that sleep she must, so as to enable her to face her work of “to-morrow.” By an effort she changed her thoughts to her daily duties, and was not disappointed, for soon she was lost in dreams; but they were troubled, and the morning light found poor Minnie unrefreshed.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GIRL's ERRAND—ADA AND MINNIE.

Monday morning came, bright and beautiful, to all, rich and poor. Minnie, though half weary, arose, full of resolute courage, and was unusually quick in her morning work. She found a good opportunity to talk with her mother. She was pleased to find that Uncle John had prepared her for Walter's proposition, and that both her parents had made up their minds to let Walter go, if he could in any way get the necessary amount of money without taking the little sum that lay in the savings bank, which they held as almost sacred. Minnie now explained her plan for getting the fifty dollars to her mother, and, as she did so, somehow it did not look so sure of success as it did to herself the night before. Her mother said:

“Dear child, I am satisfied that we should work a little more every day, as you say, if it would get us the money for Walter on the terms you speak of. But, Minnie dear, I fear you will find that Allen & Roman will not advance so large a sum on such security. They know father cannot work for a long time yet, and they know that it is your work and mine that supports all of us, and pays for medicine and the doctor's bills. And, though they will not doubt our honesty and good intentions, yet they will see that if anything happened to any of us, we could not pay so large a sum.”

Poor Minnie's heart sank within her as she listened to her mother. Then, after a pause, in which she tried to regain her confidence and courage, she said:

“Well, dear mother, have you any objection that I should try, and see what they say?”

“Not in the least, my dear child. Go, if you wish; and tell them that I make the request with you.”

“But, mother darling, I do not want *you* to work longer each day than you do now, for you could not stand it. But I want you to agree that I may; for nothing hurts me, you know, for I am so strong and young, you know.

338

“My darling,” said her mother, kissing her, “let us not dispute this point until you hear what Allen & Roman say about the money.”

It was not long before Minnie was on her way to Allen & Roman's. She took with her four shirts they had just finished. As nearer and nearer she came to Allen & Roman's place of business, less and *less* did the chance of her meeting with success appear; so that when she reached the door of the store her heart entirely failed her, and the proposition that looked so reasonable and so advantageous to the merchants the night before, now looked almost ridiculous and unreasonable for any one to propose to business men. Her breathing was short and hard, and she felt so faint that she had to stop a moment before she entered the store. She tried to collect her thoughts, and said:

“How is it that everything looks so different to me from what it did last night? I told Walter I was as wise as a woman grown, and he said the same; but, after all, I find I am nothing but a foolish little girl. Well, I will leave those shirts, anyway.”

Poor Minnie! her heart was now at the lowest and saddest depth. The loss of her great plan to get the fifty dollars seemed to bewilder her. That plan, which was the corner-stone of all the castles she had lain awake so long the night before to build and admire. The castles, that reached away into the future of her life, making every one she loved happy, she had now to give up as absurd.

As she entered the store she felt like one in a dream. Everything around her had a sort of moonlight appearance. Mechanically she handed the shirts to the clerk, and asked for a supply of unmade ones. As she spoke, her lips quivered, and it was all she could do to save herself from a burst of hysterical weeping.

Just then a beautiful little girl, dressed in the richest style, came dashing into the store from the office, full of laughter, holding a gold watch in her hand, with its long guard-chain entangled around her arm. She was closely pursued by her mother, calling her:

“Here, now, you little mischief; give me that watch.”

The child ran to Minnie for protection, and, almost leaping into her arms, thrust the watch into Minnie's bosom, saying:

“Don't let Ma have it.”

Then followed a treaty of peace between the mother and child, in which Minnie had, of necessity, to join. During this little 339 performance the mother's attention was attracted to Minnie's appearance. She had never seen her before, and there was a something about the child that fascinated Mrs. Allen. And now Minnie's dark-blue eyes lit up with an undefined hope as she saw the lady's look fixed on her.

“Did you want to see Mr. Allen?” said Ada, in her sweetest voice.

“Oh, yes, ma'am,” said Minnie; “but I have given it up. It was foolish to think of it.”

“What have you given up, dear girl; and what was it that was so foolish to think of?”

“Oh, dear Mrs. Allen, for I know now that it is to Mrs. Allen I am speaking, I have given it all up; so there is no use in telling you. You would think me so foolish.”

While she spoke, her color came and went alternately; but her eyes were brighter and brighter, and larger and larger, it appeared to Ada.

“Mr. Allen has only just gone out, and will undoubtedly be in soon again; so, until he returns, come in and sit in the office with me, and tell me all about yourself. Perhaps I can be of some use to you.”

Without speaking, Minnie followed Ada, just as one in a fairy tale follows a good Geni, who has appeared to them. She took her seat opposite Mrs. Allen, and was now calm, but excited to the utmost. Her beautiful eyes were full of truth, and in them her heart was easily seen.

“Well, Mrs. Allen,” Minnie began, “you look so kind and good, that you will not think badly of me, if I do just tell you everything—my plan and all.”

“Certainly not, dear; it is just what I asked you to do,” said Ada.

Then Minnie told her who she was; how her family came to apply for work to Allen & Roman; how she left the Sisters' school to help her mother after her father's accident; how her brother read to them every night about gold in California.

Then she told of her talk with her brother Walter the night before, and of her plan to raise the money, and how nice the plan looked that night, but how different it looked as she came near the store, and how she gave it up and was just going to leave for home when “that little angel,” concluded Minnie, pointing to little Alice, who was now seated on her mother's lap, with her eyes fixed on Minnie, “flew to me, and as I put my 340 arms around her, courage came back and I felt like myself again, and was able to tell you all this.”

Ada had to struggle to keep Minnie from seeing how much her simple story affected her. If she had followed the impulse of her heart, she would have counted out to Minnie the coveted fifty dollars from her pocketbook, but she preferred to leave the matter to Edmund; so she said:

“Now, Minnie, as soon as Mr. Allen comes in, you go into the store and wait there while I talk with him, and I will tell you if he can find any way to help your brother to go to California.”

“Oh! Mrs. Allen,” said Minnie, “I fear I am giving you too much trouble. I did not mean to do so.”

“It is no trouble; I will be very glad if Mr. Allen can help your brother.”

Then Ada talked on with her about various things, and was more and more pleased the better the insight she got into her generous, unselfish character.

Edmund came, and Ada and he had a talk on Minnie's business, and they soon came to a conclusion. Edmund called her in, shook hands with her; asked for her father in the kindest way. Then he said:

“Minnie, Mrs. Allen has told me all about your wanting fifty dollars to help your brother go to California, and, also, your plan to pay it back. Your plan is a very good one, and does you great credit, but I think I have a better plan. Mrs. Allen tells me that she often wants little jobs of sewing done for herself and the children, and she proposes to give you all such in the future, and she will credit you with the amount on this fifty dollars I will give you now, and after Walter gets to California, if he sends me the money, then Mrs. Allen will pay you and your mother for all work done up to that time. How will that plan do, Minnie?”

“Oh, that will be ever so much better for us all, Mr. Allen, and I will be delighted; but, you know, we will make the shirts for the store for ten cents apiece less, while we owe this money; that is, for the same price Rathbone & Simonson pay.”

Edmund smiled.

“No, Minnie; not one cent less. The store has nothing to do with this fifty dollars; it comes from my private funds. You work too hard as it is, and I hope Walter will be able to send you home money, as I am sure he will be, for he is a good, steady 341 boy, so that you and your poor mother will not have to work so hard, for, as I told you once before, you are looking pale.”

As Edmund spoke, he counted out fifty dollars and handed it to Minnie. She was unable to say a word of thanks, but caught his hand and kissed it. Then, turning to Mrs. Allen, she whispered:

“May I kiss you!”

Ada at once stooped and kissed her, in the most cordial manner. Minnie now caught up little Alice in her arms, and, hugging and kissing her, she said:

“I owe all this to this little angel!”

Then she put her handkerchief to her face to hide her flowing tears, and hurried through the store, with the fifty dollars grasped hard in her little hand, and now over the pavements she almost bounded.

As Edmund and Ada walked home from the store, after Minnie's visit, their conversation turned on the Wagner family, for Ada had become very much interested in all that concerned them. Edmund gave her all the particulars that she had not got from Minnie's own story.

“Well, Edmund,” said his wife, as he concluded, “that fifty dollars you gave little Minnie did me more good than if you had spent five hundred on me in diamonds and jewelry.”

“I have not the least doubt of it, my dear wife, and it does appear to me a thousand times the best way of spending money when one has it to spend.”

“Oh, yes, and it gives so much more happiness than if spent for mere personal pleasure. I will, of course, give them but little work, for I see the poor things are worked to death. Had I not better, Edmund, go and see if the poor father is wanting in any necessity?”

“Do, dear, and take sister Alice with you; but recollect they are proud, and you would hurt their feelings if you proposed to give them anything in charity.”

“Of course,” said Ada, “I could see that from the independent, noble bearing of that beautiful child. No; I will take them a job of sewing, you know.”

And so it was settled.

“Well,” said Ada, after a pause, “how fearfully this California excitement is spreading; it reaches the rich and the poor both.”

“Yes, dear Ada, so it does,” responded Edmund.

342

Then both walked on in thoughtful silence until they reached their own home.

When Minnie reached home with the money, the surprise and gratification of her parents knew no bounds, as neither supposed there was even a chance of her success. When Walter came home in the evening he was equally surprised, and declared that Minnie was not only a little *woman*, but the *greatest* little woman in the whole State of New Jersey. Now all difficulties in the way of Walter's departure were overcome. But in this success, joy and gladness were blended. Joy that Walter could go, and sadness that they were parting with him. Minnie's heart seemed proud within her at the result of her day's work; but yet, when she retired to her room that night and knelt, her prayers were all murmurings of praise and thanks to *God*. The excitement had made her feverish, and her head was hot, so, to relieve it, she unfastened her long silky hair, and let it fall loose on her shoulders, bathed her face and hands in cold water, and then retired to her bed. Soon her little, weary frame was resting in sweet, refreshing sleep.

Mrs. Wagner, recollecting all poor Minnie had gone through that day, and anxious to see if her rest was quiet, arose from her seat by the father's sick-bed and went to her room. As she entered, she stood near the bed and elevated the light in her hand. Minnie had thrown the bed clothes back so as to leave her shoulders and arms cool and free from the weight of the clothes; she is partly turned on her side and facing the wall; her little hands are clasped before her, as if in prayer; her hair has fallen down over the pillow in profusion to the floor, at her mother's feet, forming a picture of beauty and innocence that charmed and filled the mother's heart with happiness and pride, and a smile of almost triumph appeared on her face; but suddenly the smile disappears, and tremblingly she listens, for Minnie murmurs: “*Gold*, Walter, *gold*, where is it?” Oh, California! California! What do you mean to do with this beautiful child? Lure her on, and set her heart wild with fabulous

stories of your riches and gold, until we shall find her on a steamer's deck away, far away on one of your great rivers, alone and unprotected, trembling in fear; for fiends in human shape are planning a fearful fate for her. But *God*, in His almighty power, is there to watch and save her, as here, in this peaceful little room, He now guards her in her sweet, refreshing sleep.

CHAPTER IX.

DESIRE TO GO TO CALIFORNIA—DEPARTURE.

To Edmund Allen everything around Newark became daily staler and staler, and terribly insipid. The whole Pacific coast appeared suddenly to loom up, and to call for the young, energetic and ambitious to come forth and build there a great nation, and be themselves first among the first. This sort of attraction was not of that sordid character that led so many to California. It was far more noble, and reached many a heart that gold alone could not have tempted to leave home and all that was dear to them on earth. Edmund became deeply interested in all the scraps of history of the Pacific coast that were every day appearing in the public prints, and at length became fired with an ambition to mingle with the actors there. Ada saw the growing desire taking possession of his mind, and trembled to think of the consequences. At length, one morning after breakfast, he said to her:

“Ada, my love, what would you think of our going to California?”

“*Our* going!” she repeated, “you mean, Edmund, of your going,” and, bursting into tears, she threw herself into a chair close to him.

“No, darling wife, I do not mean *my* going; I mean of you, the children and myself going; but do not weep, dearest, I am not going to propose our being separated for one day,” and, as he spoke, he slipped his arm around her waist, “and you are too brave a wife to weep because I propose to have you face a little danger and, perhaps, privations for a little time, standing by my side, as you will be, that we may have the pleasure of being somebody in this almost new world that has opened up before us.”

“But, Edmund dear, California, they say, is no place for a woman.”

“No place for a woman! and why so, my darling? and who 344 are they that say so? It is just the place for a woman who wants to be a *woman*, and not a nonentity, as so many women try to make themselves, and those who talk that stuff are those who have no appreciation of what a *woman* is, or ought to be. The women who talk that way are skulking, cowardly creatures, who want to steal through the world as an inferior part of creation, unwilling to do their part, and perform the duties of life that God has so plainly assigned them.”

“Oh, Edmund, you are too severe on all those wives who are now separating from their husbands; many cannot help it, you know.”

“Well, dear, I cannot help it, or have much patience, when I hear people estimating the place of women and their duties to society at such a low standard. Of course, as you say, there is many a poor wife left at home to-day that cannot help it, and who would go but for this ridiculous idea so prevalent, that California is no place for women. I say it is just the place for women. Without them the most refined men will turn to savages, and even brutes, and become ungovernable. The husband who can take his wife to California and does not, because he fears he cannot protect her, is a coward, unworthy of the love of woman, and is, moreover, ignorant of the high, chivalrous character of the race to which he belongs.”

“Darling,” said Ada, “I appreciate all you say, and agree with you, too, and if I found you could not be contented without going to California I would joyfully step out by your side, and, with you, face all the dangers of such a home, for I confess this fever, or whatever it is, has partly caught myself, but the fear of exposing our little ones holds me back, and, if it were not for this, I would go with you, my husband, to the ends of the earth rather than separate myself from you for even so short a period. But even as to the children, you have the right to be the judge, and your wife will not falter if you decide against her judgment.”

“Ada, my darling, brave wife, whatever may be my abstract rights as the husband, this is a matter in which we should both agree, and one in which I should not be justified in following my single judgment when it is opposed to yours. So, my darling, I will do nothing that you are not satisfied with. I long to go. I am like a bird in a cage, but I cannot make up my mind to separate from you and my darling little ones.”

345

“And I,” said Ada, “cannot bear to detain you or separate from you, so I think I will go. But let us talk with our parents about it. What does Alfred think of it?”

“He, like myself, is terribly opposed to married people separating, on any pretence, for so long a time as even for one year, and therefore favors your going with me, if I do go.” Then Edmund arose, and kissed his wife, saying: “I want you to think of the matter, and talk with your father and mother, and we will come to some final decision as soon as possible, one way or the other.”

This Ada promised to do. When she saw her parents she found them utterly opposed to either of them going to California. Mrs. Morehouse stormed in anger at the idea. Ada spoke warmly in its favor, but made no impression on her parents. Mr. Morehouse finally said that if Edmund decided to go, he was in favor of Ada's going with him. This the mother declared would be her own death, and that, if Edmund went, he should go alone. Each was so decided in his own views in this respect that Ada saw that it was impossible for her parents to agree. It was the first time in all their married life that they so entirely disagreed and each remained so unyielding. They both agreed, however, in being opposed to either Edmund or Ada going. So matters stood when Ada left to meet Edmund at dinner. She found Alfred and Alice with Edmund, on her return home. That evening the whole matter was discussed over and over. At length Alice said:

“I see how you and Ada both feel. Edmund, you do not want to go if Ada is not to go with you, and she fears to take the children, and is loth to give such great pain to her dear mother, who has been such a loving, good mother to her all her life, and yet it is an agony to her to keep you at home when your own judgment says ‘Go,’ or to separate from you and let you go alone. As the matter

looks to me, Edmund, I think you must let Ada decide the whole matter for herself. I know she will not like to do this, and that it will be most painful to her, but I see no escape from it, taking all the circumstances into consideration; but I think you must both adopt this idea, and act upon it without hesitation.”

“The only objection I have to what you say, Alice,” said Edmund, “is that it looks ungenerous to darling Ada to throw such a responsibility on her.”

346

As poor Ada listened, tears ran down her cheeks, but, wiping them away, she said, in a firm voice:

“Well, darling husband, I will take the responsibility and decide for us both. It is the only way I see to solve the difficulty. I will see dear mother, and do my best to get her consent, and if I do, I will go with you. But if she will not yield, let us take it for the best, and then, darling, why, I will let you go without me.”

And, in spite of all her efforts, she was again in tears. But Edmund caressed her, and she soon recovered herself. The next day Ada had a private interview with her father, which resulted in his promising to do all in his power to get her mother's consent to her going with Edmund. In the conversation which ensued between Mr. and Mrs. Morehouse, Mrs. Morehouse exclaimed: “I am perfectly astonished, Willard, to hear you talk in this way. Only think, after all the pains we took to educate and give Ada the advantage of acquiring every accomplishment to make her an ornament to society, for which she is so well fitted and in which she is so much admired, that you should now advocate her burying herself in that horrid California, that no one knows anything about, and that will be overrun with horrid, rough characters. Why, no virtuous woman would be safe there, and, if Edmund takes Ada there, he will be murdered in trying to defend her.”

“My dear Sarah, your feelings on this occasion entirely cloud your usually clear judgment. In the first place, we educated Ada not to set herself up for a show; not simply to please what is termed “society” among the heartless, worldly fashionables. No, wife; our object was to fit her to be the bright, accomplished and capable mistress of an American household, if it should be God's will

to call her to that position, as it has been, and under any circumstances to be an educated, refined lady, who would ever bring sunshine and happiness to those around her, let her condition in life be what it might. The fruit of a refined education, viewed rightly, is as potent for happiness to its possessor on the banks of the far-off Sacramento or San Joaquin as it is here in Newark, or even in the city of New York; and as to being in danger in California, in my experience in my profession I have seen enough to know that the eyes of a virtuous woman are more powerful as a defence of her person than the revolver and the bowie-knife of the strongest man are to him. Before 347 them the libertine quails, while the simple murderer might remain undaunted before his armed victims. But, wife, who are those men who will now mostly overrun California? They will be Americans, the most courteous and considerate people on earth to women, except alone, perhaps, the Irish and French, who, as we see them here, cannot be outdone in this respect by any nation on earth. You will find that a lady in California will be an object of universal respect, and woe to the traitor who offers one of them an insult. I pity him, if such a wretch deserves any pity, for his shrive will be short, and his fate the gibbet or worse. My professional experience, too, is terribly against married people separating for any considerable time. Take what I have said, dear wife, into consideration, and see if you can bring yourself to make this sacrifice for the good of our dear ones.”

Then Mr. Morehouse walked over to where his wife was weeping bitterly, and, kissing her affectionately, he left the room. Some days passed after this conversation, but Mrs. Morehouse remained immovable, and the result was that Edmund left for California without wife or children.

CHAPTER X.

FIRST LETTER FROM EDMUND—MRS. BUCKET.

Allen & Roman took a young man into partnership in their business, of the name of Wheeler, and now the firm in San Francisco was to be “Allen, Wheeler & Co.,” and Wheeler was to accompany Edmund to California. They took a handsome stock of goods with them, and, if successful, Alfred Roman was to close the Newark house and take an office in New York, to attend solely to the purchasing of supplies for his partners in San Francisco. Robert Morehouse, just returned from

college, was to live with his sister Ada, and she was to remain in her own house until she should hear from Edmund.

The parting day came, and, as may be supposed, was as sad as sad could be to them both; but the wild dreams of California gave them both feverish strength to endure what, a year before, they could not have imagined they would have voluntarily submitted to—a separation for so long a time and for such a journey. It was nearly two months before Ada got her first letter from Edmund. She tore it open, trembling all over, while tears ran down her cheeks. Glancing through it, she saw he was well; then she dropped on her knees, bowed her head and thanked the Giver of all good most fervently. Edmund wrote in high spirits of the business prospects in California, and told her many laughable incidents of the journey and the place. Then the last page was wholly devoted to her and the children, and, as she reads it, she is interrupted by her tears and sobs. Take the letter as a whole, however, it is most consoling and satisfactory, and calculated to make her feel much happier than she had been at any time since it was determined that Edmund should go to California. Now everything goes on smoothly. Every mail brings long letters from Edmund to Ada and the firm. His orders for more goods, and his shipments of gold-dust are much larger than their most sanguine expectations had hoped for. Alfred 349 Roman has closed the Newark store, and is now in his office in New York every day, purchasing goods ordered by his partners in San Francisco.

When Edmund was away about six months he wrote Ada a letter, expressing more than usual lonesomeness and homesickness. The letter ran on to say:

The accident of a doubtful debt induced me to purchase a nice little cottage on Stockton street, all handsomely furnished, and do you know that I have got it into my head to ask you to come out and occupy it, instead of renting it, as I first intended to do. Oh, Ada, how supremely happy that would make me. As I have often written to you before, the idea of California being no place for women is a stale humbug. There are a large number of highly respectable families, not only here in San Francisco, but in all the interior towns of the State. I attended a little party to which I was invited the other evening. I went there more to see how the company would look than from any pleasure I expected to derive from the party itself. I assure you I was quite astonished to meet so

many nice ladies as I found there. They were refined, elegant women, too, with hardly an exception. They were all married, and had their husbands with them. Lucky fellows! So don't be jealous, old woman. You would have been charmed, darling, with this little company. Everybody seemed to know everybody in a minute. There was no formality, and yet there was no want of due politeness and consideration for each other. No offensive familiarity either. I was delighted, and resolved to write to you about coming out. Does your dear mother look on such a move with any more favor? Do, darling Ada, try to get her consent, for lonesome is no name for my feelings when I am without you. The fact is, I cannot endure this separation much longer. I wish to say to you here that you may now and then meet or hear of a poor, sneaking creature of a woman, or an inefficient, lazy, cowardly man, who has returned home from California to denounce it and vilify the people they left there. Pay no attention to such. They are unworthy of the least credit, or any notice whatever. John W. Geary, who came out here as Postmaster, and who, when he lost that, managed himself into the office of Alcalde of San Francisco, has been so cowardly mean as to send home his wife and children, though one of the children was born here. Darling wife, do not regard such an example. Such men must live in the world, but of what use they are I do not understand. Come to me, dear wife, and you will find here not only a loving husband's arms open to receive you, but the greatest corner of the greatest country on the face of the earth for you to live in."

After Ada received this letter she again besought her mother to give her consent, but Mrs. Morehouse seemed unable to yield, and Ada could not summon courage to go without her mother's approbation. So passed three months more, until one day Mrs. Morehouse was surprised by a call from a Mrs. Dr. Bucket.

This Mrs. Bucket was the wife of a Doctor who had lived in 350 Newark for a number of years. Shortly after the breaking out of the California excitement, the Doctor left for San Francisco, and took his wife with him. In Newark, Dr. Bucket was considered a good physician, and was much respected by all who knew him. The wife was in many respects a good sort of a person, but was talkative and fussy, and had a great desire to pry into and understand other people's business. This propensity often lost the Doctor valuable patients. Most people, however, paid little attention to this propensity of Mrs. Bucket, and ascribed it to the fact that she had never been blessed with

children. Be this as it may, it was sometimes very offensive. Her sudden appearance in Newark surprised all her old acquaintances, and, as soon as her presence was known, she became the center of attraction for all who had relations and friends in California, or who were thinking of going there. She was besieged with visitors. They all found her in high spirits, elegantly dressed and altogether the picture of happiness. She gave a glowing description of the business prospects of San Francisco, and, in fact, of all California. No one, she said, who had a particle of energy could fail in California. But when she was surrounded by lady visitors only, she had a habit, at the end of her glowing description and praise of California, of throwing up her hands and exclaiming, in a sort of tragic horror: "But oh, my dear friends, the men out there are horribly wicked in one respect—yes, in one respect, ladies." Then, lowering her eyes as she looked over her gold specs, and letting down her voice, she would add in a confidential sort of tone: "They are all untrue to their wives left at home. Yes; as horrible as it may seem, my dear friends, I tell you but simple truth when I say *all*."

On one of these occasions, there was among her auditors a young, bright-eyed, little grass widow, whose faith in her own husband it was impossible to shake, and this sweeping assertion of Mrs. Bucket's only caused her lip to curl with contempt, while she said in a voice suited to her way of feeling: "Did you say *all*, Mrs. Bucket?"

"Yes, my dear friend," said Mrs. Bucket, in a sad sort of a tone of voice, "I did say *all*."

"Well," responded the little widow, who felt spiteful and mischievous, "how about your own husband, while you are away now, Mrs. Bucket?"

This seemed rather to corner her for a moment, but, 351 recovering herself she said: "Well, to tell you the truth, I could not trust even the Doctor in California, and would not have come away for this short trip but that the poor, dear man is laid up with a bad sprained knee, and cannot possibly get out before I get back."

This candid acknowledgment was so absurd that the whole company joined in a hearty laugh at Mrs. Bucket's expense. This little turn against herself evidently angered Mrs. Bucket very much,

and, biting her lip, she looked towards the author of her discomfiture with anything but a pleasant expression of face, but, wishing to pass it off, she resumed:

“Well, ladies, you may laugh as you please, but I am speaking for your own good; yes, only for your own good.”

As she said this her eyes were again over her glasses on the little widow, with a reproving expression.

“And to convince you that I know what I am talking about, I will tell you an instance where I myself, yes, I myself, saved, yes, saved, I can truly say, a whole family.”

Here she paused, and, in turn, looked at every one of her auditors, but finally rested her gaze on the little grass widow, and, in a voice of mysterious solemnity, continued:

“You must know in the first place that I am remarkable for my detective talents.”

“We all knew that before you left here,” broke in the little widow.

Without noticing the interruption, Mrs. Bucket continued:

“So that many people in San Francisco believe me to be some blood relation of the famous detective of my name mentioned in one of Dickens' works; which is ridiculous, as my father's name was Pry.”

“Was his first name Paul?” interrupted the little widow.

“No; it was Jacob,” answered Mrs. Bucket, in an impatient, sharp tone, darting an angry look at her tormentor. “Well, ladies, those talents with which nature has endowed me, I thought, of right belonged to the people of our growing young city, in which my husband and myself have found such a prosperous and happy home; so, when the Doctor was out visiting his patients, and I had nothing else to do, I made it my business, yes, *my duty*, I may say, ladies, to watch my neighbors,

and see that they were going all right, and behaving as good Christians and citizens should behave; so, in pursuance of this self-sacrificing 352 purpose, as soon as the dear Doctor was out of the house I used to put on my things and take a walk through all the neighboring streets, stopping occasionally, you know, at corner-groceries, butcher-shops, and even at some respectable looking drinking saloons, to make inquiries about one thing or another, and pick up all *sorts* of items of information. Well, on these excursions I often noticed at a nice house not far from where we lived, an over-dressed creature sitting in the window, always looking out when I passed. My curiosity, or rather, I should say, my desire to do good was aroused, so I made several inquiries as to the inmates of that residence, and, ladies, I soon got at the truth, *and was shocked*. I found that a Mr. Briggs, a well-known merchant of San Francisco lived in this house. I would not thus tell his name, but that we are so far away that it can be of no consequence, for I am, I assure you, ladies, one of the most prudent, discreet persons on earth about such matters.”

“Of course you are, Mrs. Bucket,” said the little widow.

“Well, as I was saying, I found it was Mr. Briggs who lived there, and that he was a man of large family; but, ladies, his poor wife and children reside, *at this very time*, you understand, in Cincinnati; so who could this over-dressed creature I had seen in the window be? Well, I soon found out, and it was just as I feared; the case was as bad as you can imagine, ladies, so I felt it my duty, unpleasant duty, of course, but nevertheless a *duty* I could not shrink from, to inform Mrs. Briggs of the conduct of her husband, and to advise her to come at once to San Francisco. This I did in a long, well-considered letter. This letter, of course, I did not show to the Doctor, because the Doctor, poor man, is one of those, I am sorry to say, who never will interfere in other people's business, no matter what the prospect may be of doing good. If that was my disposition, and I am glad it is not, I never would have saved this poor family, as you will presently hear. Well, as I was saying, I did not show the Doctor the letter, but privately dispatched it to Mrs. Briggs. The husband had been keeping her well supplied with money. These California renegade husbands are very cunning in these respects; so look out, dear ladies.”

Here Mrs. Bucket again bent a meaning glance on the little widow, whose lips, in response, curled contemptuously.

“But the moment,” continued the narrator, “the poor wife got my letter, which was so circumstantial in details of facts as 353 to leave no room for a doubt, for, ladies, I never deal in anything but *facts*.”

“Of course not, Mrs. Bucket,” said the little widow, with the same contemptuous expression on her lips.

At this interruption Mrs. Bucket turned uneasily in her chair, but continued:

“The poor woman's eyes were opened, and she at once, to use a Western phrase of ours, ‘pulled up stakes,’ and was on her way to California with her five children, in three days after the receipt of my letter. They arrived all safely. I had given them the exact location and description of the house where Mr. Briggs lived, so that she had no difficulty in finding it. On arriving in the city Mrs. Briggs went direct to the office of the Chief of Police, Fallon, and inquired for Captain Casserly of the Police, just as I had recommended her to do. I recommended her to Captain Casserly, for I am proud to be able to tell you, ladies, that he is a particular friend of mine. He is a very good sort of gentleman, though I am sorry to add that he is not properly nice in his ideas of this heart-rending evil I am constantly bemoaning in San Francisco. But he appreciates my detective abilities, and whenever he meets me he asks me for ‘points’ about matters and things in general, as he knows I can give him valuable information, and always reliable. And, then, I often get many ‘points’ of great interest from him, especially about the conduct of married men.” Here her eyes were again on the little widow. “But, as I said, not being properly nice himself about such matters, he only laughs and walks off when he sees how shocked I am at what he tells me.”

“Are such consultations common between gentlemen and ladies in San Francisco?” asked the little widow.

At this Mrs. Bucket turned short around and in an angry voice said: "Madam, you should recollect that in my arduous self-sacrificing task of reforming immoral husbands, and restoring the moral wrecks to their often good-for-nothing wives, who have refused to go with them to California, I could properly hold a conversation with a respectable police officer like Captain Casserly, which it would be out of place and offensive to my natural delicacy of feeling, for which I am remarkable, to repeat here to you, ladies." Then turning away so as to cut off the retort she feared, she went on: "Mrs. Briggs did not find Captain Casserly, so Chief Fallon sent officer Howard with her to the house I 354 described in my letter. When they arrived there officer Howard and Mrs. Briggs both walked up to the door. The officer rang the door bell, and out came, sure enough, the very over-dressed creature I had described in my letter to Mrs. Briggs as sitting in the window every day, looking out. 'Who are you, madam?' said Mrs. Briggs, in a rage. 'I am Mrs. Briggs,' minced out the over-dressed creature. Then Captain Howard, seeing that the real Mrs. Briggs could not compose her temper, took the matter in his own hands. 'Miss Flounchy,' said he (these were his very words, ladies, for I had a description of the whole scene from the Captain himself). 'Miss Flounchy, I suppose you know me?' 'Oh, yes, Captain, I do,' said the over-dressed creature. 'Well, then,' said the officer, 'just get all your duds together, and this hack will take you and them wherever you wish to go; for here is Mrs. Briggs and her five children, who come to take possession of this house.'

"So, there being no alternative left for her, the over-dressed creature, without one word of remonstrance, did as she was ordered; and Mrs. Briggs walked in and took full possession, with her five children.

"When Mr. Briggs came home for dinner, you may imagine the scene; but the upshot of it was that, after some days, the husband and wife were reconciled, and they are now living a happy family, both most grateful to me."

"Well," said the little widow, as Mrs. Bucket said the last words, with an air of triumph, "if I had been Mrs. Briggs, I would have got Captain Howard to tie a weight to that fellow's neck, and then pitch him off the wharf."

“And I would have had the over-dressed creature pitched after him,” added another California grass widow.

“Ah, my dear ladies,” said Mrs. Bucket, in a deep, sad tone; “your virtuous indignation is just like my own, but consider the children, and you will better understand poor Mrs. Briggs' conduct.”

“Well,” said the little widow, in a sarcastic tone, “Mrs. Bucket, if the Doctor should get well and get out, you know, as you said, before you get back, you can deal with him without the consideration that held poor Mrs. Briggs back. That will be one consolation you will have, you know.”

A suppressed titter ran through the company, and Mrs. Bucket looked very angry, for the little widow had struck her tenderest point. Recovering herself, however, she resumed:

355

“Now, ladies, I have told you all this for your own good—not, of course, for the sake of idle gossip, which every one knows I despise. You can make light of it or profit by it, ladies, just as you see fit; and in this same view I will tell you one more circumstance, on which you can put your own construction. I take the charitable view of it, for that is my way in all such matters. I am, in fact, too charitable, although I am sorry to acknowledge that the Doctor will not give me credit for that. Well, you must know a poor confiding wife, and there are many such soft women, arrived in San Francisco on one of the steamers, and, not seeing her husband coming on board to meet her, she got the Captain to send a messenger for him. The messenger arrived at the husband's house. It was late in the night, and the husband was in bed. The messenger, who personally knew the husband, knocked violently on the door, and called out: ‘Fred, your wife has arrived, and is on board the steamer waiting for you.’ Now, ladies, what do you think was the answer of this loving husband?” Mrs. Bucket's eyes were again over her spectacles. “Yes,” she repeated, with emphasis; “what do you think it was, ladies? Why, he calls out, ‘Good Lord of Heavens! I told her to come round Cape Horn!’ In a moment there was a great fuss in the house, and the messenger thought he heard talking. Then again the loving husband calls out, ‘Bill, for Heaven's sake, do not let her leave the steamer until I come! Tell her I have gone to get a carriage.’ What do you think of all that? But hear the rest.

Well, the poor wife gets home, delighted to be reunited to her husband. Poor thing! And all goes well until the husband leaves for his place of business the next day, when the poor wife, who goes to regulating her house, finds a woman's dress hanging behind one of the doors. Well, she sits down and cries herself half sick, poor thing! And the husband comes home, and finds her in that terrible way. At first she refuses to tell him the cause of her trouble, but at length she points to the dress. And what do you think this cunning husband does? Why, he just bursts out laughing, and exclaims: 'Why, my darling Sally, that is a dress I borrowed from a lady friend and hung up there to remind me of you. Were you really jealous, my little pet?'

"Oh," the poor wife exclaimed, "how foolish I was; I see it all now; it was just like you!"

"Then she kisses him and pets him, to make him forget that 356 she had been jealous. Well, ladies, I am of such a charitable turn of mind that I must believe this man was innocent. Yes; I *must* believe that he was glad his wife had arrived, and that she was not, as he thought she was, tossing in the storms off Cape Horn, while he was comfortably in bed that night. Yes, and that his motive was a good one when he told Bill not to let his wife get away from the steamer. Yes; I must believe his excuse, absurd as it was, about the dress. But, ladies, I will leave it to you to say whether, if I was like other people in charitable feelings, I could possibly acquit this man of being a terribly wicked hypocrite. Do not understand me, ladies, as wishing to destroy your *amiable, sweet* confidence in *your* husbands out there in California. No, no; I admire that, ladies, very much; it is *so innocent* and unsophisticated; but I just wish *to hint* that they will *bear watching, as sure as you live*. Now, ladies, excuse me, but I must close this interesting interview, for I have this day a very delicate task to perform; it makes me sad to think of it, for it concerns very near and old friends; I cannot even *hint* to you who it refers to, for that would violate my high ideas of the obligation of friends to each other; but I will just tell you that it is another Briggs case, almost precisely, and that the parties concerned have long been residents of this very town of Newark. No, there is no use in your asking me, ladies, I cannot tell you; no, I will tell *no one* but the parents of the lady; they can do as they like."

All present at once saw that the parents she must mean were no other than the Morehouses, and all looked at each other with alarmed astonishment.

“No,” said Mrs. Bucket, arising from her seat, “there is no use, ladies, I cannot give you the smallest hint of whom this case now in my hands refers to; it is a secret sacred with me; so good morning, ladies; I am glad to have met you, for it is really refreshing to meet with ladies so full of child-like confidence in their husbands, and I sincerely hope you will never have cause to repent it.”

As she ceased speaking her eyes were fixed on the little widow with a look that seemed to mean anything but the wish she had expressed. After they gained the street, the little widow said:

“I have a perfect horror of that woman, and I always had; I am sorry I went near her; I do not believe a word of her infamous hints about Mr. Allen, for, of course, she meant him.”

In these sentiments the ladies seemed to concur, and separated.

CHAPTER XI.

MR. AND MRS. MOREHOUSE AND MRS. BUCKET.

When Mrs. Morehouse heard that Mrs. Dr. Bucket was in the parlor, she was perfectly astonished, and hastened to see her. Reaching out her hand she exclaimed:

“Oh, my dear Mrs. Bucket, I am so glad to see you; I am particularly glad, as it shows me you had the good sense to leave that horrid California; I cannot bear to think of it. Did you see my son-in-law, Mr. Allen, before leaving? I hope he has come to his senses, and will soon return also. Well, allow me to fix a chair near the fire for you, for the day is cold, and I want you to tell me all the news, and all about that horrid country you have left. Yes, sit down, and make yourself comfortable. I am so glad you came to see us so soon. Mr. Morehouse is out, but I can't wait for his return; so, at the risk of your having to tell it all over again, I want you to go on.”

Mrs. Bucket took the seat Mrs. Morehouse had placed for her, but seemed to be a little uneasy and fussy in her manner, and commenced by saying:

“Well, my dear Mrs. Morehouse, I will, in the first place, tell you that I have not left California as you suppose. I have, in fact, come to make arrangements with an uncle of the Doctor's, who is rich, you know, to supply us with medicines for our drug store in San Francisco, where we are doing a most flourishing business, and making money very fast; and just as soon as these arrangements are completed I return to California without a day of unnecessary delay.”

“Why, you surprise me very much, my dear Mrs. Bucket. Are there any ladies in San Francisco? I mean respectable ladies.”

“Why, yes, Mrs. Morehouse; a great number of highly respectable ladies, and a great many nice, respectable families.”

“Why, I heard from a person who had just returned from 358 California that the respectable women who had ventured out there were all returning, and that Colonel Geary, who had gone out there as postmaster, and had taken his family with him, had to send his wife home, as it was actually unsafe for a woman to reside there.”

“I believe Geary did send his wife home on some such excuse, but, if the truth was known, that was a mere excuse, because there is not a word of truth in such a statement; women are more thought of and as safe in San Francisco as they are here in Newark.”

“Well,” said Mrs. Morehouse, willing to change the subject,

“You and the Doctor have done well in San Francisco, you say.”

“Yes, my dear Mrs. Morehouse, exceedingly well; and we are, I feel sure, in a fair way to make a fortune.”

“I am truly glad, Mrs. Bucket, for your good fortune. How do you spend your time? What amusements have you out there?”

“Well, as to amusements, we have very few; but I contrive to do a great deal of good in my spare time, for there is a great field in that country for well-directed efforts, in the way of helping newcomers and reforming some of those who are there.”

“Oh, I suppose you must be overrun with low characters?”

“No, Mrs. Morehouse, no; there is but one crying evil in San Francisco, and that is the conduct of married men who have left their wives here in the East. Their conduct is absolutely shocking and abominable; and there is no exception, my dear Mrs. Morehouse.”

Here she lowered her voice to a confidential whisper, and looked hard at Mrs. Morehouse.

“No exception, do you say, Mrs. Bucket?” said Mrs. Morehouse, catching her breath.

“No, my dear Mrs. Morehouse; *no* exception can I make. I am sorry to say so to you, my dear friend.”

Here Mrs. Morehouse lay back in her chair, and seemed to fear to ask another question. So Mrs. Bucket went on:

“You know, my dear Mrs. Morehouse, that I always had great detective talent—and this has enabled me to detect several gross cases of irregularity in the conduct of married men in San Francisco. I, of course, do not look into their conduct through idle curiosity—you know me too well to think that—but it gives me 359 opportunities of doing much good, and, in one instance, it enabled me to save a whole family from ruin. I will just tell you how it was.” Here Mrs. Bucket told the whole Briggs story, and concluded with: “Now, my dear, respected friend, you have a son-in-law in San Francisco, and his wife is here.”

Then Mrs. Bucket paused, while she regarded Mrs. Morehouse with a sad, sorrowful expression of face.

“Mrs. Bucket, do please go on,” half gasped Mrs. Morehouse.

“Oh, yes, I must go on, and sorry I am for it, my dear friend; but it is my duty to go on, and I am very sensitive to duty; but, in this case, the duty is so painful that I believe I would be a coward, and not perform it, if it were not for the respect, the esteem, the love, I may say, with which I have always regarded both you and Mr. Morehouse.”

“Mrs. Bucket, you frighten me with all this preface. What can you be going to tell me? Do say at once what it is you have to tell.”

“My dear Mrs. Morehouse, think how hard it is to me to break to you the matter now in hand; but the harder it is the greater will be my consolation at having done my duty.”

“Mrs. Bucket, I can not and will not endure this suspense. Say out at once what you have to say.”

“Well, my dear Mrs. Morehouse, I am sorry to say that the case in hand is another Briggs' case, and that your son-in-law, Edmund F. Allen, is the man.”

“Impossible!” exclaimed Mrs. Morehouse, rising upon her feet in great excitement. “If you make that charge, madam, you will have to prove it, or suffer the consequences.”

This put a new and unexpected face on the whole matter to Mrs. Bucket. She turned deadly pale as the thought crossed her mind that, in point of fact, she had no positive proof of the charge against Edmund, although she firmly believed she was speaking the truth.

To get out of the matter, she made up her mind to leave the house in dudgeon, and refuse to say another word on the subject, as though she had been insulted by Mrs. Morehouse. In pursuance of this idea, she started up and walked towards the door, at the same time saying:

“Mrs, Morehouse, I came here with the best intentions. To give you information that would have enabled you to save your 360 daughter's family; but you have insulted me, so you shall hear no more from me, and you can take the consequences.”

As she said this, she turned to leave, but there stood Mr. Morehouse in the half-open door, listening in astonishment to her parting words. He had heard of Mrs. Bucket's return from California, but had not before seen her. Her words alarmed him, though he could not comprehend them.

“Why, Mrs. Bucket, what is all this about? Pray be seated and explain; for from the words I just heard I should judge they concerned us very much.”

This was said in a decided, almost authoritative tone, that left no choice to the lady but to take her seat again. Mrs. Morehouse, willing and, in fact, anxious that her husband should have an opportunity of satisfying himself, remained silent, regarding Mrs. Bucket, however, with a contemptuous look.

“Now, Mrs. Bucket, please explain fully what you deem to so much concern the welfare of our daughter's family, and, be assured, that neither Mrs. Morehouse nor myself will ascribe to you anything but good motives, even if you are mistaken in the correctness of the information you give us.”

“I am not mistaken, sir,” said Mrs. Bucket, in the tone of one injured by an unjust suspicion. “And I do assure you, sir,” she continued, “that nothing but the high respect and esteem I have for your family would have induced me to make the disclosure I have, as there is nothing so revolting to a nature like mine as to be the bearer of unwelcome news. In fact, I make it a rule to shut my eyes to the follies of the world, so that I may not be forced by a sense of duty to reveal unpleasant truths; but in this case, believing myself bound by the ties of old friendship, to look out for members of your family, I took pains to be fully posted and to make no mistake.”

“Please proceed, Mrs. Bucket, and explain fully all that relates to us and our daughter's family, and we will receive what you tell us in the proper spirit, I assure you.”

Mrs. Bucket then threw herself back in her chair and commenced by a general onslaught on the grass widowers of San Francisco, and then went on to say:

“Some three months ago, I observed that Mr. Allen purchased a nice cottage on Stockton street, and furnished it beautifully. Happening to meet him, I asked him if he expected Mrs. Allen to come to California soon. He said:

361

“‘No,’ that she would not consent to join him, and added:

“‘I will not stand this living alone much longer.’

“I then asked him what he meant to do with his cottage. To this question he said, laughing:

“‘Oh, you must not ask too many questions, Mrs. Bucket.’

“So, having my own ideas, I left. Soon after this, I one day saw one of those over-dressed creatures, of which we have many in California, entering Mr. Allen's cottage. I was so surprised that, although it was raining, I stopped to watch the house, but she did not come out, and just as it was getting dark, and I was well benumbed by the cold and wet, I was shocked to see Edmund F. Allen himself entering the house; and he remained there also, my friends, for I watched until it was late. But, sir, I was not depending on this sort of evidence; for the next day, when I was turning out of Stockton street into Washington, I saw this very same over-dressed creature I had the evening before seen entering Mr. Allen's house, standing in the butcher shop, which is on the southeast corner of those two streets. She had a small colored boy with her, holding in his hand a basket, into which, by her directions, the butcher was putting some meat and vegetables. I stopped where I was, and looked on until this person and the boy came out of the butcher shop. I then followed them, at some distance, to make sure that she was in fact the creature I had seen the night before. Well, sir, it was so; this

very over-dressed creature and the boy entered the cottage. I had tried to get a sight of her face, but she kept her veil down, so that in this respect I failed. I was so shocked at this discovery of Mr. Allen's conduct, knowing how you both and his poor wife would feel, that I could scarce support myself to make a further investigation, which I now felt it my imperative duty to make, so that there should not be a possibility of a mistake or a doubt as to the true position of matters. I say to you truly, that I could hardly support myself, but my love of morality and my anxiety to do good, and my high regard for my old friends, gave me strength, so I returned to the butcher shop and asked the butcher if he knew the lady who had just been there with a colored boy. His reply was that of course he did. I then asked him who she was. To this question he replied by asking me if I knew the man who lived in the handsome cottage on the next block? I said:

“‘Yes, it was Mr. Edmund F. Allen.’

362

“‘Well, then,’ said he, ‘that lady is Mr. Edmund F. Allen's wife.’

Mrs. Bucket now saw that both Mr. and Mrs. Morehouse began to show signs of being convinced, and of being in great agony of mind also. So, as she continued, she assumed a more familiar and friendly tone, in which she wished to show sympathy.

“Now, my dear friends, I was not yet perfectly satisfied; that is, satisfied so that I could speak to you without having a shadow of a doubt, so I watched for a chance to see the colored boy alone. I was fortunate, for the very next day he came to our drug store for sticking plaster. The Doctor was out, so I had just the opportunity I wanted.

“‘Who do you want the sticking plaster for, my boy?’ I asked, in a careless voice.

“‘For the madam; she wants to put it on her husband's face, where he cut himself, shaving, this morning.’

“‘Has Mr. Allen been long married?’ said I, still in an indifferent tone.

“‘Before I saw him,’ said the boy.

“‘Oh! You have not been long with him, then.’

“‘No; the madam hired me.’

“‘Is the madam very handsome?’ said-I.

“‘Oh, yes; very handsome. She is French.’

“‘Does she speak English?’ said I.

“‘Only a little to Mr. Allen; and he is trying to learn French all the time.’

“This I considered enough, but I have yet one more proof. In three or four days after I had this conversation with the boy, I met Mr. Allen and made an excuse to talk with him. He had not the sticking plaster on his face, but I saw plainly where it had been. Just as I was leaving him, I looked straight in his face and asked him if he understood French. It was just as I thought, my friends. He grew scarlet and seemed very much confused, then said:

“‘Why do you ask that question, Mrs. Bucket? I wish I did understand it. I have a particular reason for wishing to be fluent in it just now.’

“I now became perfectly satisfied, and thought further investigation more than useless, and in about ten days after that conversation I left California for the Eastern States. “I will conclude by saying that I am very sorry to be the bearer 363 of such very bad news to you both, but I am sure you will appreciate my motives and ascribe them to my great friendship for you both.”

Mr. Morehouse now took Mrs. Bucket in hand to cross-question her, bringing all his old practice as a lawyer to his aid in doing so. She saw his object, and was determined he should not get the least comfort from her answers. The more he questioned her the more she made Edmund's guilt appear, until, at length, she declared that his living, as she intimated, was notorious in San Francisco. Mrs.

Bucket now rose from her seat to bid Mr. and Mrs. Morehouse good afternoon. Mrs. Morehouse either did not see her motions, or pretended not to do so, and abruptly left the room. Mr. Morehouse politely showed her out, and bade her good afternoon in as friendly a tone as he could command.

When he returned to the parlor, he found his wife weeping bitterly; and, in great grief, she exclaimed:

“Oh, Willard! Who could have thought that Edmund Allen would have turned out such a scamp? I thought he loved Ada as he did his life, and now he dishonors her and his children. What will our darling child do when she hears of it? Do say, Willard, if you found anything in that horrid woman's story to make you doubt that she told the truth, for it is too horrid to believe.”

Mr. Morehouse continued to pace up and down the parlor for some minutes in evident agitation. He then said:

“I believe that woman thinks she is telling the truth, and, I must say, I fear she is doing so. As you say, Sarah, it is truly terrible to think how our poor Ada will feel when she hears it.”

“Well, then,” said Mrs. Morehouse, sitting up erect, “if it is true, there is nothing for her to do but to sue for a divorce and let him and his French lady go.”

Mr. Morehouse stopped walking and threw himself into a chair. Then, in a sorrowful tone, addressed his wife:

“Sarah, we have been in fault ourselves in this matter. Edmund would have taken his wife with him, but for us.”

“Oh, Willard! It was not you who held her back. You are not in fault.”

“Well, my dear wife, what you did, we both did. I ask not to escape, for I could have got your consent, had I sued for it properly; but, Sarah, we are both in fault, and the word ‘divorce’ must never come from either of us. We have no right, under 364 the circumstances, to even breathe

such an idea. If the horrid word is ever spoken, it must come alone from Ada herself. Oh, Sarah! Think of our child being a ‘divorced woman,’ for, no matter where the fault lies, her caste in the community is forever gone. Think, too, of those little ones being the children of ‘divorced parents. Their bright prospects being forever blighted!”

“Well, my darling husband, it shall be as you say. You are always generous to me, more so than I deserve. I was selfish, or I would have let Ada go when her husband wrote for her the last time. Yes, I was horribly selfish; but I am terribly punished. Oh, what will Ada do or say? How can we break it to her? I could not do it.”

And here again Mrs. Morehouse burst into tears and sobbing.

“That is my duty,” said Mr. Morehouse, in a firm and calm voice; “and I will, therefore, undertake it; and then poor Ada will want me near her when she receives the shock. Do not give way to such grief, wife, but trust that God will give her strength, for you know He says: ‘The winds are tempered to the shorn lamb.’ She is least in fault, because it was to filial love she yielded when she did not respond to her husband's call. This will be a comfort to her now, for she did not shrink from the duty of a wife through any selfish desire of ease.”

“When do you go to the poor child, Willard?”

“This evening, wife—at once, in fact; for the sooner what has to be done is done, the better for us all.”

Mr. Morehouse arose from his seat, and again paced the parlor floor, with his head bent forward, his eyes fixed on the carpet, with a slow measured tread, absorbed in the deepest thought. His wife did not again disturb him, but continued to weep in silence. In this way half an hour may have passed, when Mr. Morehouse stopped short in his walk as he passed his wife's chair, stooped and kissed her, and then turned to leave the parlor. His wife laid her hand gently on his arm, and said, in a low, half-choked voice:

“Tell her I will come in a little while.”

“Yes, dear; I will,” said Mr. Morehouse, again kissing her.

In a moment more the outside door was opened and closed, and Mr. Morehouse was on his way to Ada's house.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WELCOME LETTER FROM EDMUND.

The California steamer that had brought Mrs. Bucket also brought Ada's usual letter from Edmund; but in this instance the steamer had arrived so late in the evening that Ada had to wait until the next morning for her letter. Somehow, it never seemed so hard for her to wait for the delivery of letters before, as it did this time. Alfred Roman wrote her a note to say that the steamer was in, but that he could not get the mail until eight o'clock in the morning, and that he would send her letter to her the moment it came to hand. After she retired to bed, she could not sleep. Over and over she read the letter in imagination, and while she did so she would sometimes drop into a half-sleep, and now the letter became an immense sheet before her, and began to tell her of frightful things—of sickness, of fires, of earthquakes and of personal dangers besetting Edmund—until, starting from her sleep, she would recover her consciousness. So the long, long night wore away, and when the bright morning light dawned, it found her feverish and worn out with unaccountably anxious thoughts. The letter promptly came, as Alfred had promised. She looked at the address. It was in Edmund's well-known bold hand—“Mrs. Edmund F. Allen, Newark, N.J.” Passionately kissing it, she threw herself into a chair, and, opening it, read as follows:

MY OWN DARLING WIFE: This is Sunday evening. I am seated in my little bed-room writing this letter. Things are more comfortable than they used to be around me. In fact, to look around this room one would suppose it had your superintendence. Well, notwithstanding this, I am not at ease, my darling wife. If you were here, I feel that I would be a better man, as well as a thousand times more happy. Well, as I have had a sort of an adventure to-day, and not much else of interest to tell

you, I will give you an account of it and of all my thoughts and doings this Sabbath day. I feel like doing this as I am uncommonly lonesome—sad and disturbed in my feelings the whole day. Why this is so I cannot tell; but I suppose every one is subject to such turns.

366

After our breakfast I walked to the Catholic church, on Vallejo street. This church has just been finished, and is quite a church building for San Francisco. It is a plain wooden structure, not one ornament of any description on it; but it is such an improvement on the little, old dwelling-house where the Catholics heretofore had service, that it looks quite grand. It is about such a building as would be considered a good barn with you in “the States,” as they say here. It, however, cost a large sum of money, lumber being worth over two hundred dollars per thousand feet in this town just now. The Catholics here being few, and some of them not very zealous, it was found very hard to raise the necessary funds to complete this church. However, just at the right time, a Mr. John Sullivan arrived from the mines with gold dust enough, it is said, to sink a reasonably large ship, and, with a liberality worthy of his good fortune in the mines, stepped forward and advanced enough of money to complete the building; so that now Father Langloir, a good little Canadian priest, has the satisfaction of having the best church building, and much the largest congregation, of any denomination in San Francisco, under his charge.

To-day a Father Coyle, a priest who arrived here a few months ago, preached, as he often does, a rather peculiar, but a most eloquent sermon. In none part of it he touched all our hearts by alluding, in the most beautiful and feeling language, to our loved friends in their distant homes. To be worthy of these dear friends, to be worthy of being citizens of this glorious nation of ours, were some of the motives he urged upon us for leading a spotless life here in San Francisco, where so many give themselves up to excesses.

“We must not forget,” he said, “that we were sent here, plainly by God Himself, as pioneers in the great work of laying the foundation of the huge pillar upon which the American Temple of Liberty is to rest here, on the Pacific Coast.

“Yes,” he continued, while his eyes flashed with enthusiasm, “we are a chosen band, a chosen people, to do this work. The day will come when others will be chosen and sent north, and yet others far away to the south, to do the same kind of work we are doing here in California; for this great Temple of Liberty will not be beautiful in its architectural construction, nor in its enduring strength, while it rests on the shores of only the Atlantic and Pacific for support. No; it must also have a base resting close to the frozen oceans of the north, and another on the sunny lands of the Isthmus of Panama.

“Then will the unnatural foreign rule have vanished from the north, and puerile attempts at government from the south, leaving the whole continent the undisputed ‘land of the free and the home of the brave.’ Then will the monarchs and tyrannical governments of the earth stand astonished; for the great center-piece or mighty dome of this American Temple will rise, towering up in beauty, magnificence and power; and upon it shall stand the Goddess of Liberty, plainly in sight to the ends of the earth, holding aloft in one hand that civilizer of nations, the Cross, and in the other our national emblem, the Starry Banner. No clouds will dare obscure this beautiful vision. Sunlight will ever gild it, and reflect from it such warm, genial rays that they shall everywhere be felt, causing to fructify and warm 367 into life every scattered seed of liberty now lying as dead in the cold atmosphere of misgovernment and tyranny.

“Yes, you men, California pioneers, here before me, recollect that God has given you a glorious task. He has honored you in this choice; honor Him in your lives. I am proud, too, that there are so many of your wives and sisters here with you. They have an angel's part in this great work. They cheer and encourage you in all that is good and virtuous. They stand ready with cup in hand to refresh you when you thirst, and when you are tired and weary, they, with gentle hands, will wipe the sweat from your brow. Yes, California will owe these pioneer women more than can ever be repaid; for, in heroic courage and self-sacrificing devotion to their duties, as wives, sisters and mothers, they are unsurpassed by any women in the history of our country. Californians, be proud of them, and ever guard their honor with a thousand times more jealous care than you would your own lives.”

I have given more of this sermon than I intended, but it pleased me, and I liked his views of the rush of our people to this coast; for, you see, he does not look on us, as others pretend to do, merely as sordid gold-hunters, but rather as an advance guard of honor, inspired by the genius of American liberty and progress, to come here and arouse into life this glorious western addition to our Republic. These views accord with mine exactly, and I shall never be satisfied until my darling wife is here by my side, to share with me in the glory of being one of the founders of this city of San Francisco, destined, as it surely is, at a future day, to outstrip the largest and proudest city on the Atlantic seaboard. The church music we had to-day was very fine, in fact it was beautiful, but somehow it made me feel very sad and lonesome. When I left the church I did not feel like returning home for lunch, so I struck out on a walk towards the ocean, over the sand hills I have so often described to you. An hour and a half brought me to a high bluff, almost due west from the city, overlooking the ocean. I was well tired, so I threw myself down by a large rock that, with some scrub oaks that grew near it, formed a sort of a shelter, and I had a fine view of the grand old ocean. The day was beautiful, but the sea showed signs of late great commotion, for huge waves broke on the shore and against the bluff where I lay with terrible force. This was a scene that always fascinates me, and I lay there for an hour, gazing out on the mighty water. Man, and all his wants and cares, yes, all the nations of the earth and their affairs seem to sink into insignificance and nothingness when one is contemplating this vast and fearful element, striking towards you with its ever thundering, roaring crash, and then receding with sluggish and, as it were, sullen disappointment, to gather new power for another blow against the barrier that dares to limit its sway. You can half fancy that you hear the great Creator saying: "Come here, you little creatures of men, that are so puffed up and swollen out with your own fancied importance, and look at a little piece of my work!"

At length my eyes grew heavy, and as I yielded to the inclination to sleep I found myself repeating over and over Dickens' sick child's question, "What are the wild waves saying?" Now the landscape before me seemed to change. It grew dark and stormy; far away over the sea, I could see the opposite shore, and there I saw you standing, dressed just as you were the 368 morning we parted; but your countenance now expressed terror in every feature, and your arms were stretched out as

if in an effort to reach me. Then another change came. The ocean now ran full of mountains of broken ice, all crashing together with a horrid noise, and over it you came rushing with fearful leaps, with the children in your arms. "Why," said I, "this is Ada's dream realized. Oh, no; it cannot be. It must be that I am myself dreaming." And then I seemed to make desperate efforts to arouse myself, but now, to my horror, some one seemed to grasp me, and, locking up, there stood Madam Defray over me, with her horny fingers on my throat, while she began to drag me towards the edge of the cliff, evidently intending to fling me into the sea. I seemed to struggle with desperation, but nearer and nearer we came to the frightful precipice, and closer and closer her bony fingers sank into my throat. I seized her with both hands, and called for you to come and help me. I heard you give a frightful scream, and then the fiend-woman, with a demoniacal chuckle of triumph, raised me high in the air and pitched me off, and I awoke excited and trembling in every limb. Just then I heard another scream. Jumping to my feet, I saw, soaring high above the dark waters of the sea, an immense seabird, keeping itself in harmony with the wild scene in which it was taking such evident delight, by screaming horribly.

All I had gone through in this sleep was so vividly before me, and so seeming real, that it was some minutes before I could make myself believe that I was the victim of a nightmare. I found that while struggling in the dream I had torn up a bunch of California lupins, that grew near where I was lying, and in some way I cut one of my temples slightly. I think I never suffered as much in the same space of time, either awake or asleep, in all my life before. The choking sensation in my throat continued for an hour. You may judge that I had enough of the ocean for one day. A quick, long walk home was just what I needed to work off the effects of this frightful dream, and yet it did not wholly do so. What continued to disturb me most, was the circumstance of that dream of yours coming to my imagination in this frightful way, for it never had come to my thoughts before since the night you dreamed it. However, as you know, I do not lay much stress on dreams, and after a good night's rest and to-morrow's rushing work, I shall have forgotten it, and my sea-side nightmare, which was my Sunday's adventures, I told you I would relate.

With a thousand and a thousand kisses, and hugs for each of my darling little ones, and five times as many for your own dear self—

I remain, as always,

Your loving husband,

EDMUND F. ALLEN.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE WIFE'S ANXIETY—DEPARTURE.

As Ada finished reading her husband's letter, she let it drop, with one hand holding it, into her lap, while she supported her head with the other hand, as her elbow rested on the arm of her easy chair. She seemed buried in thought for a long time. Speaking audibly to herself, she said:

“That dream; how strange that it should have come to him in that horrid way! What can it mean? Nothing, I suppose; yet how very strange. Who is living with him? Who takes care of his room, which he says was so comfortable? Strange he does not tell me. After “*our* breakfast,” he says. Who took breakfast with him? Strange he does not tell me! Who can Madam Defray be? He must have some one living with him in that cottage he bought. Who can it be? Why does he not tell me? Why does he talk of being a better man if I were with him? I always thought he was better than I was. Why was he so troubled in mind? Pshaw! I believe I am a little fool, and getting jealous; talking in this sort of a way looks like it. No, I am not jealous; if I were to get jealous, I believe I would go mad. That is, if I had cause to be jealous; but dear Edmund should have explained. It would have been just so pleasant if he had done so. Not that I care, for I know I am not jealous in the least. The fact is, I could not be jealous of Edmund; that is, and live; so it is foolish even to think of it. Why is it that this letter does not seem like all his other letters? I suppose he was, as he said he was, troubled in mind. Oh, dear! I wonder he did not explain. This letter is a nice, interesting letter, but I wish he had not told me about that horrid dream, and that fiend of a woman Defray.

Oh, yes; I am glad he told it. I want to know everything about him. I wish he had told me more. This is about such a letter as he would write to his sister Alice, or to his mother. His letters to me were always not of that kind. 370 There was love in every line of them; as I read them I felt as if I were in a dream, listening to sweeter music than ever was on earth. They were dearer and sweeter, because they were written for me *alone*, and no one on earth could understand them as I did, for it was his heart speaking to mine, in language our love for each other had taught us. This letter others can read and understand. But why do I grumble? The poor, darling fellow was troubled in his mind, and could not write as he used to do. I wish I were there. I ought to be there.”

“Yes,” said she, rising from her seat, laying the letter on the piano, and with both her hands rubbing back her clustering, loose hair from her temples; “I do wish mother had let me go when he bought that cottage and wrote for me. Yes; there is no use in talking, I *must* and *will* go. I am sick of being classed as a ‘California widow.’ They are getting to be such a despised class; some of them are behaving themselves so badly.”

Ada now looked pale and troubled. Her right hand she pressed across her breast, over her heart. Upon her left she rested her forehead, as she leaned her head forward. In this position she silently walked up and down the parlor for ten or fifteen minutes. At length she murmured: “Oh, what is it that makes me so troubled and so unhappy? I must read his letter again; it must be that I am captious to-day, and that I only fancy this letter restrained and cold, as it were, compared with all his others. His letters always sounded to me like the joyous song of a bird, and flooded my heart with happiness. “Yes,” she continued, as she now walked over to the piano and took the letter, and again throwing herself into the chair; “let me read it over once more; I must have taken a wrong view of it.”

Now she read it over slowly and carefully. As she came to his frightful vision on the cliff, she started and turned deadly pale, and, covering her eyes with her hand, let her head drop back and rest for a moment on the back of the chair. Then, seeming to recover herself, she resumed her reading. When she concluded, she sat in thought for a moment, then said aloud:

“Yes; I will go and see Alice. She comes nearer to Edmund than any one I know on earth, and I am always happy when I am with her.”

She rose, went to the nursery, hugged and kissed the children, telling them that they were papa's kissss and hugs that he sent them in a letter. Then she gave some general directions to the nurse, telling her that she was going to Mrs. Roman's, and 371 would return very soon. But Ada, after her long walk, did not find Alice at home. She had gone to New York that morning, not to be home, the housekeeper said, until evening. Ada felt very much disappointed, and was now really in low spirits. As she walked home, tears stole down her cheeks, in spite of all she could do to restrain them. On her way, it so happened that she passed the church where Edmund had a pew. The door of the church was open, as if inviting her. After a moment's hesitation, she entered and stole noiselessly into her husband's pew. Everything around was so silent and impressive that it filled her with awe. She knelt, where Edmund had so often knelt, and, covering her face with her hands, she leaned her head forward, on the little shelf in front, and, while tears streamed through her fingers, she murmured:

“Oh, God! forgive me for all transgressions, and do not let me lose faith in my husband. Do not let me believe evil of him. Oh, give my weak heart courage to do what is right in all things. Oh, show me what I should do, and give me strength to do it.”

As she left the church, she thought her prayer was heard; for, though yet agitated, she knew not why, she felt perfectly decided as to her future course, and full of resolute courage to meet all the difficulties that might rise up to oppose her.

“Yes,” she said to herself, as she gained her own door; “the next steamer that leaves for California after the one that leaves the day after to-morrow shall take me; that is settled; I will begin my preparations this very day, just as soon as I eat dinner with the children and Robert. I will not tell brother Robert, but I will send him, after dinner, for father, as I want to tell him, and get his consent and blessing, and he will get mother's consent I know, when she finds how miserable I am. I love my darling parents as well, I am sure, as ever child loved before, but I am a wife and a mother, and

it is *God* who has made that tie above all others on earth, and I realize that it is so; it appears to me to-day more plainly than it ever did before.”

Now, if Ada had heard what Edmund had said aloud to himself as he walked over the sand-hills on his way back to San Francisco that Sunday he had the seaside nightmare, it would have explained to her who Madam Defray was, but it might not have lessened her anxiety; and if she had seen the reception he met with at his own cottage that evening, it surely would have made matters worse. As he strode along, he said aloud:

“How strange that Madam Defray should have appeared to 372 me in that horrid way. Well, I will drop her and her concerts. It was not enough that she got me to join in signing that card asking her to repeat her concert, but she must have me go to her rehearsals, where she is surrounded by those tawdry girls. I will take this as a warning, any way; there is no harm in that. So, Madam Defray, I am done with you; I feel your bony fingers on my throat yet!”

As he entered the gate at his own little cottage, a handsome little French woman throws open the front door, and exclaims, in charming broken English:

“O dear! my heart's all sorry; one dinner all no hot; no in time, Mr. *Allaine*; I put dinner in hot stove, but long time not here.”

Edmund shook hands with her cordially, saying:

“My dear Madam Bellemere, do not make yourself unhappy; I am so hungry that dinner will taste first-rate, hot or cold.”

And so it proved, for Edmund ate most heartily, and then retired to his room to write the letter Ada had just read.

Ada having taken the resolution to go to California without consulting any of her relatives, and apprehending opposition from nearly all of them, she became excited, and nervous in her whole manner. At dinner her brother observed it, and said:

“Why, sister Ada, what is the matter with you? I do believe you have been crying. Are you well, dear sister? Mr. Roman told me that brother Edmund was well, and doing well. Is he not?”

“Oh, yes, dear Robert, perfectly well; I have been a little excited by my walk to see Alice, and then I have a plan on hand that keeps me a little fussed; I will tell you all about it to-morrow. I want particularly to see father this evening. Would you, dear brother, go and ask him to come?”

Robert, of course, readily consented, and, on leaving the table, started for his father's house. On the way Robert met a college friend, who detained him talking, so that he did not get to his father's until after Mr. Morehouse had left on his mission to see Ada. After Robert left the house, Ada became more and more nervously excited, as she anticipated, in imagination, the coming scene with her father. All his love for her, as she now looked back to her earliest recollections, manifested as that love was in so many thousand ways, came to her mind. She could not draw to her mind one selfish word or act of his towards her; not even an angry word or look. She was always his pet, his darling, yet he never passed over the most trivial fault without pointing it out to her; but even when he reproved her he made her feel that he did so because of his watchful, devoted love. In all her little childish troubles she flew to him, and always left him comforted, and resolved to do as he advised, rather than commanded. He was to her at such times what the great oak tree is to a frightened bird in a storm. This was the feeling that prompted her to send for him just now. She felt a storm impending, and she wanted to draw protection from the great old oak that had never failed her. As she waited his coming she felt, in fact, like a child, and could hardly make herself believe she was the mother of children. As Mr. Morehouse approached the house, the night had closed in, and the gas was just lit in Ada's parlor. One window-shutter was half open, so that he had a full view of the room from where he stood in the street. There he saw Ada, with her arms folded, walking up and down the parlor, looking excited and anxious, often stopping suddenly, and, in a

listening attitude, looking towards the door; then she would resume her walking, with the same anxious look.

“She is surely in trouble,” said Mr. Morehouse, as he looked on, “and evidently she expects some one. Can it be that the poor child has heard what I have come to tell her? Oh! yes; it must be so.”

He rang the bell, and Ada herself, anticipating who it was, admitted him.

“Darling father,” said she, throwing her arms around his neck, and kissing him on both cheeks, “how kind of you to come so promptly when I sent for you.”

“Sent for me, dear Ada! Why, I did not know you wanted to see me.”

“Oh! you have not seen Robert, then? Well, it makes no difference, as you have come.”

“Does anything trouble you, my child?”

“Yes, dear father, something does trouble me; but what, I hardly know myself; but you shall hear all, and then I want you to bless me and approve of the resolution I have taken. So, darling father, sit down near me on this sofa, and, with your arm around me, listen to me. Do you recollect, long, long, ago, when I was but fifteen years old, I got into, what appeared to me, a great trouble at school. My teacher accused me 374 wrongfully, my school companions believed me guilty, and they all shunned me. I was miserable. I came home, and went to look for you. I found you seated on a sofa like this, in the library. I never said a word, but walked over and seated myself close to you. Then I laid my head right there on your heart, and wept and sobbed as if my heart would break.”

As Ada spoke, her eyes were streaming with tears, while yet they were wide open and beaming on her father's face. With a steady gaze, she went on:

“Well, darling father, you held me in your arms until I had my cry out. Then you wiped my tears away, and talked to me of my trouble so sweetly, so kindly, that I began to feel happy again. You

advised me, and told me what to do; and I left you, feeling more like a woman grown than the weak child I felt myself when I sought you.”

“Yes, my darling child,” said Mr. Morehouse; “I do recollect all that, and every marked passage of your life since your dear mother first laid you in the cradle, to this hour.

“Well, darling father, I have felt all day more like acting little Ada Morehouse of that day, long ago, than I ever did in any day of my life since then. So, I sent for you to bear my weakness, and then strengthen and encourage me with your counsel and advice.”

As she stopped speaking she threw her arm around his neck, and, dropping her head on his shoulder, gave way to a fit of unrestrained weeping.

Her father gently supported her on his arm for a few minutes without speaking, while sympathetic tears that he could not suppress stole down his face.

“Ada, my child, do not give way too much, and tell me all you have heard that so troubles you.”

“Heard, father? I have heard nothing.”

“Heard nothing?” repeated her father, in great surprise. “What, then, darling child, has made you so unhappy?”

“Dear father, when I tell you, I fear you will not have patience with me.”

“Do not fear that, my dear child; but tell me all.”

“Well, father, an undefined anxiety and fear has troubled me for some days, and Edmund's letter of to-day has terribly increased it. I tried, but I could not shake off this feeling; so I went to church to-day, and I prayed to *God* to guide me to do 375 what was right; and, all at once, resolution came to me to go to California and join my husband; so, darling father,” she continued, dropping her voice so low as to be hardly audible, while her lips trembled as she spoke, “I am going on the next

steamer that leaves after this one. Say I am right, darling father, and that you will bless me, and that you will get darling mother's consent and blessing for me, too!"

Her father's arms pressed her close to him, as he said:

"My sweet, darling child, depend on it, you will have the blessing and consent of both your parents to carry out your resolution; and I promise you that neither your mother nor myself will say one word against your going, if, after discussion, you still desire to go."

"Then," said Ada, with a look of triumph, "the question is settled, without a word of discussion, dear father; for go I surely will."

This put the matter in a different position from anything Mr. Morehouse had anticipated. For a moment he thought to himself—"Would it not be a good idea to let Ada go to California in ignorance of all Mrs. Bucket had said of Edmund's way of life, writing by to-morrow's mail that she was coming?" But such a thought was hardly entertained when it was rejected as unworthy of the consideration of an honorable man.

"Ada, dear, have you any objection to tell me what was in your husband's letter, that has so disturbed you, or have you any objection that I should read it?"

"None whatever, dear father; and I will explain anything to you which you do not understand from the letter itself."

Saying this, Ada handed him the letter, and waited patiently for him to read it through. As he finished, he turned to Ada, and said:

"Tell me, dear, what is in that letter that troubles you? Most wives would not only be satisfied with it, but be proud of it."

"Well, dear father," said Ada, hesitatingly; "I suppose so; but it is not like his other letters—it looks to me restrained, which shows to me that he must be in trouble."

“Did he tell you what family or whom he was living with in that cottage, Ada?”

“No,” said Ada, with a half shudder; “he did not.”

“Who is this Madam Defray, Ada?”

376

“I never heard of her before,” said Ada, again shuddering; “but,” she continued, “I think Edmund was just out of spirits, and that horrid nightmare he had on the bluff made him write me an unsatisfactory letter; but his having that vision, or dream, was so strange. It was the same I had the very first night we heard of gold in California. It is foolish, I know, but I cannot get it out of my head that it is a call for me to go to California and save Edmund from some terrible trouble or danger.” As Ada said this, her lips quivered with emotion. Mr. Morehouse saw that the time was come when she must hear all Mrs. Bucket had told. So, assuming a calm, self-possessed manner and voice, he said:

“Darling Ada, you were always a brave little woman, as child, girl and woman. I want you now to prepare yourself to hear what is disagreeable to hear, and mind there may be a possibility that it is all untrue.”

As her father spoke, Ada turned deadly pale, sat upright and fixed her large eyes on his face, but said not a word.

“Did you hear,” continued her father. “that Mrs. Dr. Bucket has returned from California?”

“No,” said Ada, in a husky, choked voice.

“Well,” said Mr. Morehouse, now talking fast, as if he would save his child from further useless suspense, “she has come, and has been to see your mother and myself. She gives a terrible picture of the morals of the married men out there who are separated from their wives, and includes Edmund, by name, in those accusations.”

In a moment Ada sprang from her chair, her eyes lit up with a wild, flashing light her father had never seen there before. As she stood erect before him, she folded her arms across her breast, and said:

“Father, you say Mrs. Bucket came to see you, and distinctly charged my husband, Edmund Allen, with leading a shameless, immoral life in San Francisco?”

“That, my child, was the substance of what she said, though in a different way.”

“And you and mother believed her, father; did you?” said Ada, with emphasis on every word, as she slowly spoke them.

“I cannot say I fully did, though I will do Mrs. Bucket the justice to say that I think she herself believed what she told us.”

“Father, dear father,” said Ada, in the same measured tone; 377 “the charge is utterly and wickedly false; I know it is false; my heart within me tells me it is false; Edmund seems to speak to me this moment, and says it is false; but, false or true, the charge being made has altered my plan of leaving for California.”

“You will not go then, my child, until you hear from San Francisco?”

“Will not go, father, you say? Will not go!” Ada repeated again, still in the same voice and manner, and yet standing in front of her father with her arms folded. “Will not go, father! The steamer that leaves New York the day after to-morrow will bear Ada Allen and her two children on board for San Francisco!”

“So soon! my child,” said her father.

“Yes, father; not one day, not one hour, that I can help, will my husband rest under a charge against his honor and character, and that threatens disgrace to his children. No; if I hesitate for a moment I would be *just no wife at all*. Now, I understand plainly that I was forewarned, for I see far away

in California my husband in danger, and my children too, far more so than when I saw them in my dream on the broken ice. No, father, a few minutes ago I was nothing but a weeping child in trouble, leaning on your breast for support and consolation; now all that is past; what I have just heard has brought me to myself; from this moment I am done with tears; none shall dim my eyes until I meet Edmund; then I will weep in my great joy, or—or—I will just die! I am no weak, shrinking child, palmed off on the world for a woman worthy of the exalted position of wife and mother. No, father, your honorable blood runs in my veins; your teaching is here in my heart; I am the wife of a man whose honor and truth I cannot doubt, whatever others may do. I know every aspiration, every impulse of his heart. They were all of the highest and noblest character, founded on deep religious convictions. Let no one dare to tell me that *God* will not guard the steps of such a man in the worst of temptations! No, the charges are false, and I will fly to my husband, and show to all my faith in his truth, and, to him, the love and devotion I owe him as a true and faithful wife. Father, dear father,” Ada continued, while her voice sank lower and trembled with emotion; “if there were anything wrong out there, can I say that I have been wholly without blame? Did I act the part I should have done, as a wife worthy of a good and true husband, when I 378 declined going with him to California, or to him, when he sent for me?”

“My darling child,” said Mr. Morehouse, while a shadow of deep pain passed over his fine face; “it was I who was to blame for that. Forgive me, darling Ada; it was, perhaps, the only selfish act of my life toward you; but, oh, Ada, you do not know how hard it was for me to part with you for such a far off place!”

Ada leaned forward, and, throwing her arms around her father's neck, passionately kissed him; then, in almost a whisper, close to his ear, she said:

“You must not blame yourself for loving your Ada too much.”

“Nor you, my sweet child, for loving your parents too well,” responded her father.

“Promise me, dear father, that you will try to bear up against this sudden parting, and get darling mother to do so too. Let us look forward with cheerful hearts, and hope for the best. Oh,” continued

Ada, laying her hand on her heart, “something *here* tells me, assures me, that I shall find a true husband and a happy home in San Francisco.”

“God grant it, my darling child. Consider all settled now as you wish it. I will go at once and bring your dear mother to you; I have already her consent to anything that you might propose.”

Then, rising from his seat, he took Ada's hand, and, pausing for a moment as if struggling to command his voice, he said, in a tone of deep feeling:

“God bless you, my child! I am prouder of you this moment than I ever was in my life, and I wish to assure you that I will enjoy thinking of you out there in California, fulfilling the noble duties of your position, a thousand times more than I could if you were here near me, shrinking from them.”

The only answer Ada made was to embrace him, and, while gently wiping away the tears that stole down his cheeks, she kissed him, and whispered:

“No tears now, dear father; we have work to do, you know.”

When Mr. Morehouse reached home, he found his wife anxiously waiting for him, and miserable enough. He soon explained everything to her, and she found great relief in knowing the worst and in being called on for help, and none could do it 379 better. She hastily prepared herself, and returned with her husband to Ada. The mother and daughter, when they met, had a long, long embrace; but no word was spoken, except that Ada whispered: “Bless me, dear mother; but do not give way, or I am lost.”

Mrs. Morehouse, with a great effort, overcame her feelings, and said with solemnity: “God bless you, my darling child.” Then, assuming a cheerful tone, she continued: “I will sleep with you to-night, darling, so as to be ready to go to work on your preparations very early in the morning.”

“That will be nice, dear mother,” said Ada in the most cheerful voice, as she again kissed her.

It was getting late, and it was agreed that Mr. Morehouse should go home, and, before coming in the morning, he should call on Alfred and Alice Roman, and bring them with him to Ada's. But, on leaving the house, Mr. Morehouse turned his steps toward the Romans'. He preferred to go and see them then, though so late, as he could not rest for hours yet, if he went home, he was so feverish from all he had gone through that afternoon. He found the Romans yet up, though on the point of retiring.

They were at first alarmed at his call, and Alfred said: "Why, dear Mr. Morehouse, you look pale and out of sorts. What can be the matter?"

"Do not feel alarmed, my dear friend; I do feel a little out of sorts, but nothing more."

"Let Alice get you some refreshment," said Alfred, yet looking very uneasy.

"Do so, if you please; it will do me good, I believe. I have some business of a serious character to talk of with you, but, as I am tired, I believe I will accept your offer."

In a very few minutes Alice had refreshments on the table, and Mr. Morehouse ate with a good appetite, and helped himself to wine a second time. As he turned from the table, he said: "Thank you, my dear Mrs. Roman. That has done me good, and I believe I could not have told you what I have to tell, but for the strength it has given me."

The husband and wife looked at each other with an expression of great anxiety, but waited for their visitor's pleasure, without speaking.

Mr. Morehouse now proceeded by relating Mrs. Bucket's call 380 and detailing minutely all she had told him; then of his visit to Ada, and of her resolution to go to California without one day's unnecessary delay. It can be imagined how Alfred and Alice felt.

Alfred said, while circumstances and the woman's testimony gave color to the charge, "Yet," said he, "I will stake my life on the proposition that it is false."

As to Alice, whose attachment to her brother amounted to almost worship, she had no patience with the charge, or with those who made it. She wept bitterly, saying over and over: "Poor, dear, darling Ada, what can I do for you? Noble, generous, confiding angel! As brave as you are true to your husband."

Then she would exclaim: "Oh, Edmund, you won an angel for a wife, and may God grant that my firm belief will be justified, that you are worthy of her." Then they talked and discussed the matter until the night was far spent. Then Alfred urged Mr. Morehouse to accept a bed from them, as it was so late. Mr. Morehouse assented, and, as he did so, expressed himself as much easier in mind since their evening's discussion and exchange of views. This was an anxious, restless night for them all, and, as for Alice, she never closed her eyes. After breakfast Mr. Morehouse went home, while Alfred and Alice went directly to Ada's. On the way, Alfred often said: "Now, dear wife, recollect that for poor Ada's sake you must overcome your sad feelings, and not give way."

"I will try, my dear husband; oh, I will try hard, for Mr. Morehouse told me of Ada's brave resolution, 'never to shed a tear until she shed ones of joy on meeting Edmund all true and good as he left her,' so I must not be the cause of her breaking her noble resolution."

But, as they drew near the house, Alice became terribly excited and nervous, induced by loss of rest, as well as by her feelings of deep sympathy for her darling Ada, as she always called her. This sympathy was but natural, for Ada and Alice were devotedly attached sisters. They were much the same character of women. They were both of a high order of intellect. They were alike unselfish, generous and brave, charming in person and delightful in manners and deportment. They regarded each other with unbounded admiration, and their love had become almost romantic in the fervor of its character.

Mrs. Morehouse and Ada had risen early this eventful 381 morning, and after a hurried breakfast commenced the work of preparing for Ada's journey. Trunks were hauled out, and clothes scattered, as they prepared them for packing, in confusion all over the floor. Ada's brother Robert, the nurse and a hired man were all at work; so busy that they seemed scarce to have time to ask a question.

Mrs. Morehouse was the moving spirit of the whole troupe, and gave directions to all, in a cheerful voice, and had a pleasant word and a smile for every one; so that no one, to see and hear her, could for a moment imagine that her heart was sick and sad within her. But Mrs. Morehouse's was truly a fine character. She now appreciated the mistake she made in preventing Ada from accompanying her husband to California, and was determined to do all she could to lessen the sorrow she saw that mistake had brought. The door bell rang just as Ada and her mother had finished packing a trunk containing clothes for the children.

“Oh, mother,” exclaimed Ada, “that is Alice. How can I meet her?”

“Courage, my daughter; courage,” said Mrs. Morehouse; “recollect that you have work to do, as you said to me.”

“Oh! yes; you are right, darling mother; and thank you for reminding me.”

In a moment more the loving sisters were in each other's arms, but forewarned, as they both had been, they triumphed over the rush of sympathetic thoughts that would otherwise have caused them to give way. Each longed to tell the other how unshaken their confidence was in Edmund's truth and honor, but neither could trust herself to speak his name. Their eyes, however, as they met, said plainly what they dare not let their tongues repeat in words. Mrs. Morehouse's timely call for assistance was a reminder to both, as it was in fact intended; so, without a spoken word, Alice hastily threw off her things, and, placing herself under Mrs. Morehouse's directions, was, like the others, an active worker in Ada's preparations for her long journey. At six o'clock that afternoon all was declared ready. About this time Mr. Morehouse appeared, informing them that he had bought tickets for the passage of Ada and the two children to San Francisco, and had secured a stateroom which they were to have all to themselves. He had seen the Captain, who promised to do all in his power to make Ada comfortable. He had also procured a letter to the Captain of the steamer on the Pacific 382 side, which would insure her kind attention when she would reach that part of her trip. He had also procured a draft for a thousand dollars on San Francisco, and some letters to

three or four prominent mercantile firms in that city. This he did to provide against any possible contingency of her wanting either money or friends on her arrival there.

When Mr. Morehouse took Ada aside and explained all this to her, she thanked and kissed him; but, with a confident smile, told him that his precaution about her reception in San Francisco was all unnecessary; “for, dear father,” she continued, “I shall find in San Francisco as true and loving a husband as ever woman met.”

“I cannot help believing so, also, my darling child; yet it is not right to run any risk in such a case as this. You need use neither money nor letters, if you find all as we hope you will.”

The next morning the terrible parting scene came, but all bore up well, and even appeared cheerful. As they reached the steamer, there was only time for Mr. Morehouse and Alfred to conduct Ada and the children to their stateroom and hastily return to the wharf. There they found poor Mrs. Morehouse seated in the carriage, with her head resting on Alice's shoulder, in a fit of hysterical weeping and sobbing, as she exclaimed: “My child! my child! oh, my sweet, darling child! I shall never see her again. She is gone, yes, gone forever!”

Alice now acted the daughter's part, and did and said all she could think of to soothe and console; but Mrs. Morehouse responded: “Oh, you are young, Alice, and will live to see her again, but at my age, how can I hope for such a joy? Oh, California! California! why have you come to break the hearts and destroy the sweet, dear homes that were all so happy—oh yes, so happy, until we heard of your gold?”

On the way home Mr. Morehouse joined with Alice in efforts to console the poor mother, but it was days before she recovered her composure, so as to be anything like her former self.

CHAPTER XIV.

SAN FRANCISCO—THE PRETTY LITTLE COTTAGE.

Now, the steamer, with Ada Allen and her two children on board, dashes out to sea, and Ada's face and all her thoughts are turned to San Francisco. The care of the children, who were sea-sick for the first few days, gave her constant employment, and obliged her, in a measure, to forget her own great anxiety. The voyage was favorable in all respects, and Ada found herself all safe in San Francisco, on the night you were first introduced to her, my young readers, when we left her and the children, as you will recollect, in a carriage, with Captain George Casserly, just turning out of Washington street into Stockton, when little Alice says: "The man on the corner is choking, he coughs so hard;" and which coughing disappoints Captain Casserly, as it informs him that his message, intended to put Edmund on his guard, did not reach him; and this brings the Captain to the conclusion that he will have to send Mrs. Bucket's over-dressed creature flying from the cottage, at which they are about to stop. The carriage now stops opposite a neat white cottage, with the pretty little Gothic gate in the front fence, just as described in the paper the Captain has, which Mrs. Bucket wrote for Mrs. Morehouse. As the carriage stopped, Ada thought her heart stopped too, or that she was, in fact, in some frightful dream. Little Alice jumped up and cried out: "Oh, Ma, here is Pa's house," and little Willard called out: "Where, Alice? Oh, yes, I see." But Ada heard neither. She had let down the carriage window, and, leaning forward, her eyes were fixed on Captain Casserly, who had jumped from the carriage, and was now pulling the door-bell. The door opened, and a colored boy of, perhaps, twelve years of age, made his appearance. Though the Captain spoke intentionally in a very low tone, as he asked, "Is your master in, boy?" Ada heard the question as if it were spoken with a trumpet in her ear.

384

"No," said the boy; "he is at the theater."

Ada gasped for breath, but held her listening position without the least motion, as the Captain asked the next question:

"Is the lady in?"

"No; she is with him at the theater,"

As Ada heard the answer, she covered her face with her hands, and dropped her head down so as to rest it on the carriage door. She murmured to herself, while making a desperate struggle to retain her self-control:

“I told father I was no weak child; that I was a woman, worthy to be a wife and mother.”

Then, for an instant, her whole thoughts were on *God*, as, in her heart, she made an act of submission, and again murmured:

“Thy will, not mine, be done.”

Strength, and almost life, seemed to come back to her; for now she raised her head quickly and spoke to Captain Casserly, who, for a minute or two, had stood by the carriage door, apparently perplexed as how to proceed. The tone of her voice was calm, but almost a whisper:

“Well, Captain, there is nothing for it but to go in and wait.”

“Ah,” said the Captain to himself, “she is of the right spunk; yes, she will go through all right.” Then he answered Ada:

“You are right, Mrs. Allen; there is nothing for it but to do as you say.”

As he said this, he threw open the carriage door, at the same time telling the driver to take down the two trunks and carry them into the cottage. He now helped Ada and the children to alight, and, observing that Ada was trembling and greatly agitated, he offered her his arm, and, in a kind, almost confidential tone of voice, said: “Now, Mrs. Allen, you must have courage, for the sake of the children, and then it may be that you will find everything all right yet.”

By this time the Captain had no idea that “everything was all right,” but he had a plan in his head to deceive Ada.

“Thank you, Captain,” said Ada; “you are very kind.”

They now entered the cottage, and the children ran all over it, to the dismay of the colored boy, who stood gazing at the whole party now taking possession of the house, with his lips wide apart and his eyes all white, they were so wide open, but uttering not a word. After the trunks and all the traps were comfortably stowed away, Captain Casserly drew Ada aside and said: "Now, Mrs. Allen, I will leave you; but I will remain within one hundred yards of this cottage until you have seen Mr. Allen; because," he continued, so as to put her at her ease; "Mr. Allen or you might want to see me—at least, there is a possibility of such a thing. So don't be uneasy; I will be close at hand."

She made no reply but simply "Thank you," with emphasis, and the Captain was gone.

Again the children proved a relief to Ada, as they demanded her attention, and so partly saved her from her own thoughts. After running into every corner of the house, little Willard discovered on the sideboard some bread and butter, and, without ceremony, he and little Alice helped themselves. After they had eaten all they wanted, little Willard threw himself on a sofa he found in the little back parlor, and fell fast asleep. Little Alice took her mother's large, warm shawl, and spread it over him; and when she had it fixed, the little nest looked so comfortable she herself slipped under the shawl, and was soon dreaming of ships, steamboats and police captains. Ada approached, and, though sad and anxious, she smiled when she looked at her darlings in their sweet sleep, and exclaimed:

"Oh, how sweet! Could I but lie down by you, my angels, and sleep on, sleep on, forever."

Then suddenly seeming to recollect herself, she continued:

"Oh, no; what am I talking of? The charge is false; I know it is; it must be."

Then she fixed the shawl more carefully about the children, and, walking towards a door that opened into a bed-room off the back parlor, she looked curiously in. The room was almost elegantly furnished. The carpet was a handsome Brussels. The bureau and wash-stand had marble tops; the mirror was a large, French plate one; the bedstead was of rose-wood; there were two large rocking-chairs, in red plush. It was, in fact, one of the snuggest and most elegant little bed-rooms that could

be imagined. The colored boy had followed Ada as she went toward the room, with a suspicious sort of a look. She turned to him and said, in a low, hesitating voice:

“Who occupies this room?”

“My master,” said the boy, bluntly.

“And who else?” said Ada, in a more excited tone.

386

“My mistress,” again responded the half-angry boy.

Ada grew deadly pale, and, turning away, went into the front parlor. She threw herself into a rocking-chair near the fire that burned cheerfully in that room; she clasped her hands across her breast, while she let her head rest sideways on the chair. In this position her face was turned towards the parlor door that opened into the hall. Her eyes were fixed on this open doorway with an intensity of expression not to be described. Just then her attentive ear detects the sound of a footstep; it is yet on the street, but the blood rushes quickly back on her heart; she hears it now at the gateway; it is *his*, every nerve of her system proclaiming it to her; she hears the pass-key in the doorlock; her eyes grow dim, but again she struggles and prays to *God* for strength; it comes; she rises to her feet, but finds she cannot move from the spot, and there she remains like a statue, with her eyes staring at the open doorway.

CHAPTER XV.

FROM THE THEATER—THE JOYFUL MEETING.

When Captain Casserly left Ada, his plan about the matter was to watch for Edmund's return with the lady from the theater, and tell them of the reception they were likely to meet with, and in this way “help Allen out of the scrape,” as he said. The night was cold and raw, and the Captain, moreover, felt a little extra liberal, as he had Ada's three twenties in his pocket, so he invited the driver of the carriage to go with him to a saloon near at hand, in Washington street, and have a

hot whisky punch. The driver, of course, accepted, and, fastening his horses near the corner of the street, accompanied the Captain, declaring that it was “just in his hand, for he was so very cold.” While they were seated in the saloon enjoying themselves, time passed quickly, so that the Captain was surprised when he looked at his watch to find how late it was.

“Why,” he exclaimed, “the theater is out; I must be off. You stay at the corner here until I see you again.”

He walked rapidly in the direction of the cottage. As he drew near, he saw a gentleman and lady ahead of him.

“Ah,” said he, “I am just in time.” And, quickening his pace, he overtook them as they were passing through the little cottage gate. The gentleman had just taken out the night pass-key from his pocket, and was reaching out to put it in the lock, when he felt the Captain's hand on his shoulder, who said, as he pressed his hand hard:

“Mr. Allen, before you go in let me speak to you.”

The escort of the lady turned quickly round in astonishment, saying, in broken English:

“I no Mr. Allaine, I Monsieur Bellemere.”

“Why, Bellemere! is this *you*, and *this* Madam Bellemere with you! and you have been to the theater! and you live here with Mr. Allen!” said Captain Casserly, in a quick, excited tone, 388 as he took in the whole position of matters for the first time.

“I see it, I see it all now.”

“*Certain! Certain!*” vociferated the little Frenchman; “Mr. Allaine *one very good man; one very generous man*; me and Madam take care of Mr. Allaine.”

Just as the Captain was about to ask another question, they were all startled by a loud, excited cry in the cottage. Captain Casserly snatched the night key from the hand of the Frenchman, and all three made a rush for the door.

As Ada, as we have described, stood erect in the little front parlor of the cottage, unable to move or speak, the key she heard in the front door did its work, and Edmund, as she knew it was, entered. But he stopped in the hall to take off his overcoat and change his boots. The colored boy ran towards him in excitement, but before he had time to speak, Edmund asked:

“Is the Madam in?”

He asked this question while he was trying to get off a tight boot. The boy's answer was:

“There is a lady in the parlor, sir.”

Edmund did not notice that the boy said *a* lady; he thought he said *the* lady, and was in too bad spirits, and in too much pain with his boot to notice the boy's excited manner; so he continued:

“Here, boy, put your foot on the toe of this boot until I pull it off. Oh, is that the best you can do? Just get out my way; I will manage it myself.”

Then, as Edmund worked on with the boots, he spoke aloud:

“Oh, Madam Bellemere, pity me. I have not heard a word by this steamer from my darling wife. I have been down there at the postoffice standing for over three hours, in the cold and mud, waiting for my turn, expecting to be repaid by a letter from my beloved wife, but not a line did I get; and what is strange, I did not hear either from my partners. All I got was some invoices of goods and a line from my brother-in-law's clerk. What I fear is, that my precious wife is sick and could not write, and that all the others are afraid to write and tell me of it. Yes, she must be sick, if the letters are not lost; that is my only hope, that the letters are lost. There is *one* thing I am determined on; this separation *must end*. I *will* not, I *cannot* endure it any longer. I will go home by the next

steamer. Madam, where is Monsieur, your husband? I thought you went to the 389 theater with him to-night? I will not wear these tight boots any more.”

Then, as he hung up his hat, he bent his head forward as if in deep thought, and continued to speak, in a lower voice, as if for himself alone:

“My sweet, darling Ada! If you could see my heart to-night, and see how sorry and lonesome it is, you would fly to me if you had to come over that horrid field of floating ice we both saw in our dreams.”

As he pronounced the last word, he was inside the parlor door, and, raising his head, he found himself face to face with Ada. Her eyes were on his with a piercing, searching light, but every lineament of his features, every expression of his countenance, told only of truth, purity and honor, dispelling every lingering shadow of doubt and flooding her heart with love and devotion. The spell was broken, and, with a loud cry of joy, they flew into each other's arms.

The outside door is thrown open, and Captain Casserly, Monsieur and Madam Bellemere stand looking on, as Edmund takes the now fainting form of his wife to the sofa, where he sits back, supporting her in his arms. Captain Casserly remained perfectly composed; he was evidently satisfied with the turn matters had taken. Madam Bellemere seemed bewildered by the whole scene, until the Captain brought her to herself by telling her what to do for Ada. Then she was active and all attention.

Color and life soon began to appear in Ada, and the Captain, observing it, remarked: “A faint from joy is always short.” Then, beckoning to the Bellemeres, he retired with them to the little dining room back of the parlor, explaining to them that the lady whose presence so astonished them was Mr. Allen's wife, just arrived from New York, and that it was just as well to leave her alone with her husband until she had completely recovered. The Bellemeres were delighted at the discovery that the “beautiful lady,” as they called her, was their friend's wife, and expressed their joy in all sorts of extravagant ways.

Ada opened her eyes, and, seeing that she was supported in Edmund's arms and that they were alone, she reached out and drew down his head until her lips touched his ear, and whispered: "All the horrors, worse, far worse, than the ice-fields we saw in our dream, are passed forever, and I am safe in your arms, darling. Oh! speak to me, Edmund, and tell me that 390 this is no cruel dream to deceive me—that it is all reality; for oh, it seems too happy, too heavenly, to be all true!"

"It is all true—it is all reality, my darling, angel wife," said Edmund, as he clasped her fondly and kissed her; "and we must only thank the Almighty Giver of all good for this happiness. Tomorrow you will explain all to me. I will not ask you a question to-night; but—but—" and his voice trembled and he seemed for a moment to fear to speak.

Ada started and gazed anxiously in his face, and exclaimed: "But what, darling? Speak, love; speak!"

"The children!" was all he said.

"Oh, you poor, dear darling," she said, throwing her arms around his neck and kissing his cheek. "They are both safe asleep on the sofa in the back parlor. Come and see them."

In an instant he was kneeling by the sofa, lost to all around him, kissing the darling children over and over, while they slept on, all unconscious of his passionate caresses. He kissed their foreheads, their cheeks, their cherry lips; he raised their little hands and well remembered little feet, and pressed them to his lips, while tears stole down his cheeks.

Then Ada was there, leaning on his shoulder, enjoying the happy sight, smiling through her joyous tears, the first she had shed since she had told her father that "she would not shed another tear until she shed tears of joy by Edmund's side."

Then mother and father are both on their knees, leaning over the precious gifts before them, with bowed down heads and hearts overflowing with gratitude. Their whole thoughts are of God and His goodness.

As Edmund arose he recollected the Bellemers and Captain Casserly. Calling them, he formally introduced Ada to Monsieur and Madam Bellemere, saying, in a complimentary way:

“I assure you, my dear wife, you are under great obligations to Madam. She has made me so much more comfortable since she took charge of my cottage than I was before.”

Ada received the little couple in the most charming manner, and thanked them for all their kind care of her dear husband.

“Oh,” said the Madame, “your husband one very kind gentleman to us. He help us; he do much for us. Oh, yes, he gave us your own nice room, and take one not so good himself. We very glad you here to take your own room.”

391

As she said this, the little Madam pointed to the room Ada had asked the colored boy about, receiving an answer that so frightened her.

Captain Casserly now arose to take his leave, and congratulated both Ada and Edmund in the warmest manner. Ada gave him her hand, and thanked him cordially for his kind attention to her, in which Edmund joined her most heartily.

As Captain Casserly regained the street, he stopped for a moment, turned round, and, looking at the cottage, said, half aloud:

“Well, if there is a happier house on this side of the Rocky Mountains than that cottage is to-night, I would like to see it; for it would be a plant right straight from Heaven.”

Then, walking on slowly, he continued to talk to himself, saying:

“Well, old Mother Bucket's mischief-making did not turn out so bad after all. Her ‘over-dressed creature’ turns out to be no other than poor little Madam Bellemere, who is with her husband teaching dancing in this good city, and sings in one of the churches on Sundays for a living.”

Then, after a pause in thought, the Captain continued:

“Those Jersey fellows always boast of the beauty of their girls, and make fun of us New Yorkers about our girls; but they don't palm Mrs. Allen off on me for an *average*. No, no; to make a fair average she should have two of the ugliest girls in all New Jersey put with her, and then she would be a little *over* the average. Well, I can't help admiring beauty. It always bothers me when I come in sight of it. I suppose it is my confounded Irish blood that is the cause of it. I was once in love with an angel in the Sixth ward, in New York. I was just nineteen, and the girl was fifteen. She was as handsome as a picture, and that was the reason Eugene and my poor mother packed me off to California, under the care of John McGlynn. Then I dreamed and built castles in the air, as I lay on the deck of the South Carolina, on the passage around Cape Horn. Yes; I was to return home to New York with bags and bags of gold, and was to purchase the Astor House for a private residence, and have a wife just like this Mrs. Allen, but here I am in the second year of my California life, a police captain, under Chief Malachi Fallon. Well, I may strike it yet, who knows? Three twenties is not so bad for an evening's work, after all.”

392

Poor George! He felt sad at the outlook for himself; but, as usual, was soon over it. He now stopped at the saloon in Washington street, took some more refreshments with the carriage driver, then he jumped in the carriage and ordered himself driven to his lodging house. There he dismissed the driver, saying: “Tell Mallot to send the bill for the carriage to Allen, Wheeler & Co., to-morrow, and it will be paid.”

CHAPTER XVI.

WAITING FOR LETTERS—MRS. BUCKET AGAIN.

On the arrival in New York of the return steamer from California, after Ada's arrival in San Francisco, there was a happy scene in Newark, worthy of notice. The day the steamer was expected Edmund's father, mother and Alice were all at Mr. Morehouse's, and were to stay there until Alfred should bring them the California letters. About noon they were all seated around a lunch table, urging each other to eat, but no one making it a success, so nervously anxious were they all. From where they sat, they had a view of the walk from the front gate to the house. Suddenly they start, for the gate spring is heard to close with a bang. All eyes are on the walk; and there, sure enough, comes Alfred, with a hurried, excited step. Alice alone seems able to move. She darted to the window, threw up the sash, but her voice failed her. Alfred, however, saw her, and understood her; so, taking off his hat, he waved it over his head, and exclaimed:

“All is right; all is glorious!”

The closing of the scene can be imagined, but not described. After Mr. Morehouse regained composure, he exclaimed, while walking up and down the parlor in a joyous, excited way:

“I thought I was not mistaken in that boy of yours, Captain Allen. I have seldom been mistaken in character in my life. I thought I understood him perfectly the day he asked me for Ada's hand. I said to myself that day: ‘Yes, you are a spar taken from the old mast; you *will do*; and so it proves, Captain Allen. Yes, so it proves, thank *God* ’”

After a little struggle with his feelings, the Captain commanded his voice enough to say:

“I thank *God*, too, my friend, that you were not mistaken; but how can we admire that daughter of yours enough? She has proved herself a priceless treasure; for cool, unfaltering courage, and faithful love, she cannot be surpassed on earth, sir. That dear girl is fit to command a ship in a storm. Yes, sir; I would trust her with the best ship that ever left port in a typhoon, off Cape of Good Hope, and my life for it, she would take her through in safety.”

Mr. Morehouse now laughed heartily at the Captain's enthusiasm, while he slyly wiped away tears of gratitude and joy he did not want any one to see. Ada's letter to Alice was full and minute, and

Alfred read it aloud, being the only one who could command his voice on this occasion. The next day Mr. Morehouse handed a check to his wife of a thousand dollars, telling her to make as many poor people as possible happy with it; “for,” said he, “we must do as we have been done by.”

Then Captain Allen and Alfred followed this good man's example; and gave Alice a thousand more for the same object; so the good news that steamer brought from California made many hearts happy.”

The little bright-eyed “California grass widow,” who was such an unbeliever in Mrs. Bucket's onslaught on the married men of San Francisco, heard the good news that came to the Morehouses with great satisfaction. She contrived to throw herself in Mrs. Bucket's way, and, going up to her in an animated and friendly way, took her hand and exclaimed: “My dear Mrs. Bucket, I am so glad to have met you; for I know you will be so delighted to hear that all that scandal about Edmund Allen was utterly false. It turns out that the ‘over-dressed creature’ you described so exactly, and were so intimately acquainted with, was no other than a highly respectable French lady, of the name of Bellemere. I believe she has a title, but I don't recollect it now; who, with her husband, yes, with her husband, Mrs. Dr. Bucket, was living with Mr. Allen in his cottage, until such time as his wife could go to California.”

“Madam,” said Mrs. Bucket, with quiet dignity, but looking much disconcerted, “I would have you to understand that I *am* not acquainted with any of the ‘over-dressed creatures’ that infest San Francisco.” She was going to say something more, when the little widow ran on:

“Oh, I don't mean to say, exactly, that you said you were acquainted personally, you know, but the lady whom you used to stand out in the wind and rain to watch, after dark, you know. *That lady*, I say, proves to be a French lady of rank, 395 and under the protection of the French Consul at San Francisco. Now, don't look so angry at me, for I am your friend, and have sought this interview just to tell you that my husband writes me that it is rumored in San Francisco that the Consul, Monsieur Dillon, Mr. Allen, and the husband of this French lady, are only waiting for your return to California to commence a suit for slander against your good husband, the poor Doctor; for the

law, they say, makes him responsible for his wife's acts, and I wanted to suggest to you that you had better see Mr. Morehouse before you leave, and get him to beg you off.”

Poor Mrs. Bucket turned very pale, but said not a word. The little widow saw she had her revenge, but, notwithstanding this, she had no mercy; so she continued, by saying in a low, half confidential tone:

“Did the steamer bring you any news of the Doctor's sprained knee? Had you not better hurry home? He may get out, you know.”

Without waiting for an answer, the little widow was out of sight. It is quite certain that Mrs. Bucket called the next day on Mr. Morehouse to beg for mercy, and it may be owing to what he said to her that Mrs. Dr. Bucket was never again heard to allude to the immorality of married men in San Francisco; though she never let an opportunity pass of giving “California grass widows” a cut. When she returned to San Francisco, Captain Casserly found a decided change in her propensities. All her detective talents were now directed to catching Chinese chicken thieves.

CHAPTER XVII.

A HOUSEKEEPER'S DIFFICULTIES—CONCLUSION.

A word more and our little history concludes. Edmund and Ada were now the happiest of the happy. A few days after Ada's arrival they gave a little entertainment to Edmund's friends. Ada was delighted with this specimen of San Francisco society, and wrote of it enthusiastically to her mother and Alice. Of course Ada had difficulties to encounter in her housekeeping, but Ada and Edmund laughed over these sometimes ludicrous troubles, and, from the way they both took them, you might imagine they enjoyed what would have put a lady housekeeping in the Eastern States into tears. Their great trouble was the almost impossibility of getting, or keeping for any length of time, hired girls. A great many good Irish and German girls came to California in those days to work out in families, hotels and boarding-houses, but they nearly all got married in a very short time after their

arrival. Ada was often deserted by her hired girl with half a day's notice; that she wanted to get married the next day.

"Mary," she would say, "why did you not let me know this sooner?"

"I did not know it myself, ma'am, until just before dinner; it was only then he asked me."

"Try and get him to put it off until next Sunday; that will be such a nice, convenient day to get married, you know, Mary," Ada said, in a half-confidential, coaxing way.

"I did, ma'am, but he said he 'can't wait.'"

When Edmund came home, Ada told him of this.

"Well, my dear," said he, "there is no help for it; it is the old story; so I will go to the hotels tomorrow, just after the steamer gets in, and I will find some girl just arrived."

"Yes, dear, do so, and I will not engage her unless she agrees to remain unmarried for three months, at least."

"That is an excellent idea, my dear wife; let us try that plan."

The girl was found, and Ada made her bargain. Seventy-five dollars a month, and to remain unmarried three months. The girl worked on nicely until Sunday afternoon, when she asked Ada's permission to go and see a girl who had come out with her from the East, and who was living with a family in Saint Ann's Valley. Of course Ada did not refuse. The girl went, but never came back. The next day Edmund went to hunt for her, and found that she had been married the same Sunday evening she left them. On his return, Ada met him with:

"Did you find her, dear?"

“Yes, dear, and it is another case of ‘can't wait.’ The husband says he will pay you any reasonable amount of damages.”

So Ada's bargain ended, and they had a hearty laugh over the failure of her plan. It was well for Ada that her mother had made her a neat and elegant housekeeper, for she never found herself totally dependent on servants in any respect whatever. Under her directions, the roughest creature, in an emergency, could be made use of for a servant, and everything move smoothly and comfortably.

Mr. and Mrs. Morehouse had promised Ada a visit during the coming Summer, and Alfred had consented that Alice should accompany them. Business being flourishing, Edmund built a charming, commodious little house, amply large enough to accommodate their expected friends, and furnished it, with the help of Ada's exquisite taste. The location was high, and commanded a magnificent view of the bay and city. There was on three sides of the cottage a wide porch or piazza, which added much to the beauty of the building, as well as to the pleasure of the inmates, particularly of the children, who were never tired of racing on it.

When they took possession of this beautiful residence, Ada had a house-warming party. She gave out sixty invitations, and nearly all who were invited came. It was enjoyed as a delightful evening by all. There were twenty-five ladies of intelligence and education in the company, twenty of whom were married, and all were young and mostly very handsome. The supper was sumptuous; the music was excellent, and dancing was kept up till a late hour. The first dance of the evening was opened by the Captain of the steamer in which Mrs. Allen had come to San Francisco leading that lady out for his partner. I was so fortunate as to have had an invitation to that party.

Two short years before, and scarce two of the company knew each other, or ever imagined they would see, or care to see, the Pacific coast. Now all were as familiar as if they had been playmates in childhood, and all felt that they were Californians in heart and soul. Less than two years before, every one in that company had, in tears and sadness, left home, friends and all the dear surroundings of youth, to face dangers and privations, the extent of which they knew not of. Now it appeared as if, here in Ada's beautiful parlors, the loved scenes of the past had, as if by the stroke

of a fairy's wand, come back to them, and that here in this land of gold they were on the eve of realizing the wildest dreams of fortune that had lured them from their far-off, early homes. So, with hearts relieved from every doubt or apprehension as to the future, they gave way to-night to gaiety sparkling with wit, and to unreserved merriment and joyous laughter, that rings yet in my ears. The recollection of that scene is as when sometimes a glorious sunbeam will burst on the path of youth or early manhood, so warm, bright and genial that it seems to reach on, on, through all after life; never wholly obscured by the darkest shadows that fortune may fling in your way. No; it seems somehow to come to your mind, when clouds are the darkest, and whispers of a home, a haven, beyond them all, where it will again burst out, amid glories unspeakable.

The next day after this party, Ada walked with Edmund out on the porch, as he was leaving for his place of business, and, kissing him good-by, she remained to enjoy the view before her. The day was beautiful; the immense number of ships, decorated with the flags of all nations, at anchor in the bay, gave it a peculiarly picturesque appearance. The islands in the bay, the Contra Costa mountains, with the dark top of Mount Diablo in the distance, all came in to heighten the beauty of the scene and charm the beholder. As Ada looked, her bosom swelled with admiration and enthusiasm, and she could not help exclaiming:

“Oh, California! California! I love you with all my heart. You shall *always* be my home—yes, and my last resting place. I will talk for you; I will work for you. Your friends shall be 399 my friends. I love you, not for your gold, but for your majestic rivers, your magnificent bays, your grand old mountains and for your fertile, beautiful valleys, that will yet be covered with happy homes and teeming with population. Then will the whole Union be proud of you as a sister State—yes, proud of you for the intelligence, enterprise, skill and high moral bearing of your children; a thousand times more than for all you could ever bring them of riches and GOLD.”

MINNIE WAGNER;

OR,

THE FORGED NOTE.

CHAPTER I.

A HAPPY BREAKFAST—ARRIVAL IN CALIFORNIA.

My readers will recollect that in our story of Ada Allen, we left our little heroine, Minnie Wagner, tired and weary from the great day's battle she had fought through so successfully and well, fast asleep in her little bed, a beautiful picture as she lay, that filled the mother's heart with maternal joy, that was almost pride. Yet, why is it, that when Minnie murmurs in her sleep: "Gold! Walter, gold! Where is it?" the mother starts, turns pale, trembles, and now kneels and prays to God, with flowing tears, to guard her child? The mother could not answer this question, clearly, herself, for it is an undefined feeling of terror; or a sort of presentiment, it may be, of coming danger to her darling, that Minnie's dreaming words have caused to flash to her heart. It is that one so young, so innocent, so beautiful and childlike, should, in her dreams, be in that pursuit, in which, her mother knows, the strongest men, all the world over, have often and often become corrupt and vicious, and in which even innocence and purity have sometimes sunk to the lowest depths of degradation. Yes, the mother trembles that Minnie so covets, even in dreams, the possession of that which seldom or ever elevates or prompts us to good and noble actions, and which it is so hard for us to use in a manner pleasing to God. 402 But, was it the power, grandeur and self-exaltation that gold is supposed to bring, that caused Minnie to so covet its possession? No, no; far from it; all her castles built for the future have nothing of that sort about them. Her favorite one was her parents' cottage, in which she was born; refitted, beautified and handsomely furnished, with a new piano and everything to suit; a well selected library, easy chairs for her darling father and mother to sit in, while they read or she reads to them, and who were to struggle no more at hard work; a well stocked hardware store for Walter, with a nice, gentle, sweet wife for him, who should be ever so fond of her. As to the part of the castle that related to herself, it was all underfined in its shape and make-up.

It is true that as she glanced her mind toward it, she caught glimpses of many little rosy walks and nooks, with now and then a little, beauteous turret peeping out in the misty distance, and somehow

in this part of her day-dream, her brother's old schoolmate, and now his fast friend, James De Forest, was always sure to make his appearance. One time he was bringing a rare flower for her garden; then she saw him bringing a new, interesting book for her father and mother to enjoy; then he was near her while she tried her new piano; then he was helping her to water her flowers. Oh, yes; perhaps it is a scene like this that has now stolen into her dream; for, as her mother looks again, a charming blush, with the sweetest smile, spreads over her face.

The mother's alarmed heart again grows calm, and, leaving the room, she exclaimed: "Oh, there is no danger! That smile in sleep betokens naught but innocence and purity, even if her dream is ambitious, and God will in his mercy guide her steps in every danger, for in Him her young heart trusts, I know."

Minnie slept uncommonly late the next morning, for, as we have seen, she was very tired; and her mother, knowing that she was so, did not give her the usual call. When she awoke, the sun was shining brightly in her little room, and the morning looked far advanced. She leaped to the floor, and the first object that caught her eye was a beautiful bouquet of fresh-picked flowers on her dressing table.

"Oh!" said she, "who has been here? But I know that is dear Walter's work. But why did he not call me? Every hour I can talk with him now is most precious. It was too bad I slept, when, if up, I could have been with him, and 403 then poor, dear mother has been getting the breakfast all alone."

Then Minnie raised the bouquet from the vase, thrust her little nose among the flowers to drink in their fragrance, saying: "What nice taste Walter has in the arrangement of a bouquet! How kind to think of me in this way."

Then she kissed the knot of blue ribbons with which the flowers were tied, and replaced them in the vase. When she soon afterwards emerged from her room, her mother and Walter were seated near the father's bed, waiting for her to sit at breakfast with them, which was all ready.

As she kissed them all good morning, they laughed at her for sleeping so late, and she chided them for not having called her. Then she gave another kiss to Walter for the flowers, and they all enjoyed an unusually happy and cheerful breakfast that morning, for, though there lay the sick father, and Walter's departure was so very near, yet hope now threw some of its bright, warm rays into that little cottage, which seemed to light up their future paths through life with many a charm and pleasure they never saw there before. Breakfast over, all was excitement to get Walter ready for his departure. That day Walter resigned his place in the hardware store; saw his friend James De Forest, and went with him to Suttan & Son, the agents of the ship on which James had taken his passage, and Walter paid his fare to San Francisco. The ship was to sail in just one week, but that gave Walter ample time to prepare himself and say "good-bye" to all his friends. Many little presents poured in on him. His old employers, with whom he was a favorite, gave him a handsome outfit of camp utensils for his new life in the mines of California; then came from lady friends of the family jars of preserves and sweatmeats of all sorts, which were most acceptable; then came a dozen or two of English ale, with the request that Walter would, after being a month in California, write fully to the donor; then a basket of champagne on the same arrangement. So far as James De Forest and Walter had seen their fellow passengers, they were most favorably impressed. To them they appeared far above the average in education and intelligence; and so, in fact, they were, as they afterwards proved. And this character could be claimed for nearly all the immigrants to California at that time. The good Wagner parents did not wait until the parting hour to give words of advice 404 to their beloved son. No; they knew they could not trust themselves to do it then. So they had a long talk with Walter the day after his passage was taken. The mother got his solemn promise never to play cards, except in a social way, when ladies were present. This promise, which was faithfully kept, saved Walter in after life from many a temptation and danger. The mother gave him a handsomely bound copy of the Bible, though diminutive in size, with a prayer for his safety inscribed in the first page. The father gave him that world-admired little book, "The Following of Christ," with a "*God* bless you, my boy," written in the first page.

As to Minnie, there was scarcely an article in his trunk that did not, in some way, bring her sweet presence to his imagination whenever he opened it. The parting day came; it was, as all such days

are, very lonesome and sad; yet hope threw such sunlight into it on this occasion, that all bore up bravely and well. Early that morning James De Forest had called to bid farewell to the Wagner family; Mr. and Mrs. Wagner, with tears, and blessings and prayers, bade him “Godspeed.” Minnie accompanied him to the door, and then to the garden gate. As he took her hand in his, at parting, he said, in the lowest whisper, and in a voice of emotion:

“Minnie, will you sometimes think of and pray for me?”

“You will always be in my thoughts and prayers when I think of Walter,” she said, looking earnestly, brightly and calmly into his face; “and I will glory in your success, and be as proud of it as if you were my brother.”

In an instant he raised her hand to his lips, and, passionately kissing it, he said:

“Oh, thank you, Minnie; that is all I want you to say now, and all I want to make me feel like a real brave man in my battle for fortune and position in California.” Then, quickly turning to a rosebush, he picked off a beautiful bud, and reaching it to her, he said:

“Will you take this, and keep it until I call for it?”

Minnie now blushed scarlet; then turned very pale, and with quivering lips, said, in a voice full of feeling, just above her breath: “I promise.” In an instant James was out of sight, hurrying toward the ship that was to take him to far-off California. He murmured as he went:

“Yes; she will keep that promise, for she never broke one in 405 her life; and if I live and am fortunate, I will come some day to claim this little flower.”

As Minnie turned away from the gate, her eyes were fixed on the rosebud, and there was a queer, new feeling about her heart, as she seemed to register *there* the promise, and she murmured:

“Yes; there can be no harm in that; he is a good, noble fellow, and so fond of Walter, too. Yes; I will keep this bud for him.”

Then, walking into her own room, she opened a book to place it in press, and just as she was about to place it in position she quickly raised it to her lips, then hastily closed the book on it, while a quick glance around the room and a conscious blush betrayed feelings she herself did not know lurked round her heart. Early the next day the ship sailed, bearing away Walter and his friend, and leaving poor Minnie with a lonesome heart and in a fit of weeping she, for some time, found it impossible to overcome. But Minnie was, as Walter said, a great little woman, and, as she said herself, she had her father and mother to comfort; so, in a surprisingly short time, she was once more, with smiling face, performing her daily duties, and doing all she could to cheer up her parents.

After a reasonably short and pleasant voyage, Walter Wagner and James De Forest found themselves in San Francisco.

That we may understand better their future careers, let us say a word of the general character of each of them. James De Forest was just twenty-one years old; he was of middle height, well-built, good-looking, and prepossessing in his manners and general appearance; he had a good education, and was of steady, cautious business habits, and a good judge of character; he was upright and honorable in all his dealings with every one. Walter Wagner was one year younger, but looked older; tall and well-built, and promised to be a powerful man when fully developed; his education was good; he was frank and off-hand in his ways, but was far too confiding, and, therefore, subject to be often the victim of designing men; he meant no wrong to any one himself, and he judged others by himself, and gave his confidence, without reserve, to any one who would make a pretence or show of friendship or good-will towards him; he was not a good judge of character, mainly because he never stopped to examine it carefully; when deceived, he was furious on the discovery, and never thought of blaming himself, as he should have done, for the careless way in which he had laid himself open to the deception; when he formed an acquaintance that he liked he was impatient if any one said a word to throw a doubt or suspicion on the character of his new-found friend; this was a serious fault, and often lost Walter, in his new home, the friendship of good and true men, and exposed him to the influence and designs of the cunning and deceitful.

On their arrival in San Francisco, neither of our young friends had money enough to pay their way to the mines, which was very expensive at that time, so they were forced to look for employment in the city. James De Forest engaged himself for three months, at two hundred dollars a month, to a company of three or four men, who were about to put a steamer on the Columbia River, in Oregon. Walter hired to White, McGlynn & Oliver, to drive team, at one hundred and seventy-five dollars a month. So the two friends had to separate, which they regretted, though well pleased at their first start as to money; for, my young readers, if you have never experienced what it is to step into a strange community without a dollar in your pocket, you can have no conception of the happy relief it is to suddenly find yourself well provided for. Walter's frank, off-hand, open ways soon won the good-will of McGlynn, who drew from him the whole story of the way he got the necessary money to come to California, and of Minnie's part in it. Mack's generous heart was touched, and he at once got his firm to advance to Walter a hundred dollars of his wages. So Walter that night, the next day being "steamer day," wrote a long letter to the loved ones at home, in which he inclosed Allen, Wheeler & Co.'s receipt for the fifty dollars Minnie had got from Mr. Allen, and a draft on Allen & Roman for fifty more. In this letter he gave a full account of his voyage, and tried to give them a just and correct idea of the business prospects in California. In thus coming down to the real facts of the case, he had, of course, to dispel any hope they might have had of his finding gold by the half-bushelful at a time. That he had struck a glorious and prosperous land, the inclosures he was enabled to send them, in this, his first letter, ought to satisfy them. He concluded by asking them to give three cheers for California, and three more for the end of shirt-making. There was not a lazy bone in Walter's body, so he worked well and zealously with his team, and every day made friends; but this sort of employment did not suit him, and it appeared a slow way of making money, after all, in California. So at the end of two months he struck out for the southern mines, by which general designation all the placer regions watered by the San Joaquin and its tributaries were then designated. For the first six months in the mines he made money fast. His good habits, good humor and untiring hard work secured him a place in a company of industrious and intelligent workers. Unfortunately, however, his company undertook, at great expense, to dam the waters of one of the main rivers, and, for a short distance, to turn its waters from the natural channel, hoping to find immense deposits of gold in its bed. They accomplished the great undertaking in two

months, but found no gold worth talking of, and every dollar they had made previously was gone in the enterprise. Nothing daunted, Walter went to work again, and made money fast, as before. Sometimes his day's work brought him half an ounce, and sometimes two, and even three ounces of fine gold. Again he found himself the owner of over three thousand dollars, and again his ambition spurred him to go into a ditch enterprise that promised a prodigious return. This ditch was to bring water some five miles to a placer region, then unworked, though rich, for want of water to wash out the gold. The engineer who undertook to direct the operations of the company proved to be entirely ignorant of his business, the whole project was a failure, and Walter found himself once more without a dollar. Again he struggled and won success, and again lost nearly all by misplaced confidence in a sharper, who robbed him. It was now away in the last part of the Summer of 1850, and Walter was, in fact, little better off than when he commenced. But he was not down-hearted or discouraged. His young blood ran fast from heart to limb, and back to heart again, with free, healthy pulsations, bringing to his whole system energy and courage that would not tolerate him in looking back or indulging in useless regrets, but pushed him on in the wild routine of California's rushing business. It was no small satisfaction, either, to him to feel, as he contemplated the success and failures of the past year, that he had proved his power to make money, even if he had lost it again, and, besides that, he had regularly sent one hundred dollars home, each month, to those he loved so much. As he looked forward, with undiminished hope, he exclaimed:

“I would not take five thousand dollars for my experience. I 408 will not try to go so fast in future; I will do as James De Forest is doing; I will go ‘slow and sure.’”

Hearing of extensive new discoveries of placer diggings in the vicinity of Downieville, in the northern mines, he struck out for them, spent his last dollar in buying into a claim, and was once more lucky. His partner in the claim, Isaac Hilton, proved to be a first-class man; prudent, shrewd and wise. He was some ten years older than Walter, and had a most salutary influence over him. When their claim was worked out, they found themselves with a cash capital of five thousand dollars. With this they opened a little trading-post, or store, a few miles from Downieville, high up in a mountain canyon, where a host of miners were at work. The site on which stood their little mercantile shanty was picturesque and beautiful. Now, once more, fortune seemed about to deal out

her choicest favors to Walter. He felt proud and happy, and wrote to Minnie in glowing terms of his prospects, and excited her imagination to the highest, by the poetic, romantic description he gave her of his house in the mountains, expressing the most earnest wish that she and his mother could be with him, for he had just had the sad news of his father's death. When poor Walter wrote this letter, little did he dream that the great struggle of his life, the turning point on which all was to depend, was yet before him. The men into whose employment James De Forest had entered were successful in their enterprise beyond their expectations, and soon took James into partnership. He had not grown rich fast, but every month improved the prospects of his company, and he was slowly and surely becoming one of the most prominent and wealthy men connected with the navigation of the coast and inland waters of Oregon. Walter and he had never met since their separation in San Francisco, but they were in constant correspondence, and every circumstance connected with Walter's family was always of the first interest to young De Forest.

CHAPTER II.

SIR JOHN CAMERON—AGNES AND-LUSK.

Now let me draw attention, in this chapter, to far-off England. The spot I will take the reader to is the beautiful residence of Sir John Cameron Ward, not many miles from the city of London; a proud old Baron, who is not half so proud of his title or his riches as he is of the untarnished honor of his whole race in the past. He is good-hearted, unsuspecting and generous, almost to a fault; he is a devoted husband and an indulgent father; he has an amiable, good wife and two beautiful daughters, aged, respectively, seventeen and nineteen. The education of Margaret, the elder, is just completed. She is beautiful and ambitious. Agnes, the younger, is yet under instruction, and she seems to have no developed aim in life, except it is to please every one. The father loves them both devotedly, and never denies them anything in his power to procure for them. To watch his intercourse with his two children, you could not help thinking that his love for the younger is more marked and, perhaps, of a more tender character than that for the elder.

The young ladies are very fond of riding on horseback, and they each have a beautiful riding animal at their command. The old coachman has lately died, and his place is taken by a man who was recommended to Sir John by a nobleman, a particular friend of the family. This new coachman's name is Thomas Lusk. He is tall, fine-looking, and not over twenty-five years old, and, for his position, he is remarkably genteel in his manners and deportment, and, in fact, far above his position. He has a thorough knowledge of horses, and is a careful and excellent driver. In the presence of Sir John and his lady, his manner is remarkably subservient, almost abject; but when alone with the young ladies it is sometimes free, bordering on impudence. On one of these occasions, the elder daughter gave him a severe reproof; so, with her, he was afterwards more careful. When the young ladies rode out without their father or other gentleman escort, it was Lusk's place to follow at a respectful distance, and be within call, should they need his assistance. It was on one of these rides that Margaret reproved him so severely. Unasked, he had ridden up and intruded himself into the sisters' conversation, and Margaret at once ordered him back to his place. Agnes was mortified at her sister's severity, and afterwards took an opportunity to tell Lusk that she was sorry her sister had acted so inconsiderately. Lusk was, in fact, a low, designing villain, who was recommended to Sir John only because the nobleman who did so was also deceived by a man high in official position, to whom it was said Lusk was in some way disreputably related. This apology from Agnes gave Lusk an insight into her character that he resolved to turn to his own account. He exerted himself in every way to please her. To her he always assumed a sad, down-cast demeanor. He put himself in her way in every possible manner, and on one occasion, when the family were out, he made a pretence of showing her something about her riding-horse, and, while leading the horse and walking with her, he poured into her ear a made-up history of his family, in which he had been the victim of the dishonesty of an uncle, and was now forced to take this humiliating position, under a false name, as he told her, to save a darling mother and sister from want and starvation. While relating this story, he played his part to perfection, often having to stop, overcome by emotion, caused by the sad recollections he was forcing himself to recall. Poor Agnes was in tears, and, as she was leaving, he put in her hands two letters—one purporting to be from his almost broken-hearted mother, thanking and blessing him for accepting his present subordinate position for her and his dear sister's sake; the other letter purported to be from his

sister, and was to the same effect. He then cautioned Agnes to tell no one, or he would be disgraced and utterly lost, and, above all things, to let no one see the letters, but to return them as soon as possible. Agnes, now that she found that Lusk was, as she supposed, a gentleman by birth, became immensely interested in him, and whenever she met him alone afterwards treated him as an equal. This soon led to the confession from him that he loved her to distraction. She listened with bated breath, hesitated, and was lost. The villain now planned an elopement and private marriage. Thus the terrible blow fell on a house on whose escutcheon no tarnished spot ever appeared 411 before. Sir John shut himself up for weeks and months, and for long years never allowed poor Agnes' name to be spoken in his presence. The poor girl soon realized not only the terrible blight she had brought on her home, but also the true character of the man Lusk. The day after the marriage, he coolly told her the whole truth, acknowledging the deceit he had practiced on her, and that he himself was nothing but an outcast. When she fainted away at the revelation, he shook her brutally, calling her a fool, and, when restored to full consciousness, he told her to recollect that he was now her master by the laws of England; that he wanted no child's play, and that she must write at once to her father for money. Finding that she was physically, as well as mentally, unable to obey him, he flew to the trunk containing her personal effects, which she had contrived to bring away with her from her father's house, and, ransacking it all through, took every article of jewelry she owned. They were all her Christmas and birthday presents, from her childhood until this unfortunate day, and were of considerable value. With these he left the house, and returned towards night half-drunk, with plenty of money in his pockets. He now assumed a kinder manner, and asked Agnes to forgive him for the part he had played, pretending that it was his love for her that had led him to it. He adopted this course as the best way of operating on her parents, and kept it up for nearly a year; but, not finding it successful, he again gave way to his real instincts, and became fearful in his brutality towards the unfortunate girl. A child was born to them. He had it christened with all the publicity he could, and named it John Cameron Ward Lusk. But all this brought no aid or notice of any sort from the family. Lusk grew desperate, and joined a regular band of house robbers. He was soon elected their Captain, on account of his superior skill and daring. Now passed years of misery and horror for Agnes. Beaten, kicked and cuffed, and often half-starved, she remained the robber's wife and abject slave. The child grew large and strong, in spite of his father's brutality to him. When beaten

or kicked by the father, he flew to the mother, whose screams would sometimes protect him. On these occasions he would not cry, but look towards his father, and his mother would tremble at the terrible, dark look in his eyes as they fell full on his father's face.

“Oh,” his father would sometimes exclaim, as he met the 412 dark look, “that boy has a devil inside of him, instead of a soul. Well, he will do to take my place some day, for I see he is surely a chip of the old block.”

At length, the bandit resolved to rob Sir John's house. The expedition was all well planned, and Lusk's familiarity with the premises made it an easy “job,” the robbers thought. When all was arranged, that night Lusk returned home as usual, half-drunk. Throwing himself into a chair, he gave out a mocking sort of a laugh, saying:

“I am thinking how nicely I will be even with that old dotard, your father. Oh, yes; I will be even with the old villain that has left us to starve.”

Agnes trembled and grew sick with fear, for she knew what Lusk's words must mean. She controlled herself, however, as she was most anxious to discover his plans, and she knew silence was her best way to effect that. She arose, laid his supper on the table for him, and again took her seat, without uttering a word. He commenced to eat, without further remark. Just as he had finished eating, a man whom Agnes had often seen before with her husband came in, and, without invitation, threw himself into a vacant chair. Without saying a word to the man, Lusk turned to Agnes, and said, bluntly:

“Leave the room. I want to talk on business to this gentleman.”

Agnes slowly arose from her seat, and walked with a sort of a listless step out of the room; but the moment she closed the door she darted with a noiseless step into a closet that was in the wall between the two rooms, and close to where Lusk sat. As she stood, with breathless, listening attention, she heard him give his confederate, who seemed not to have been at their late council, the full particulars of their plan of robbing Sir John's house the following night, concluding with:

“We will go armed to the teeth, for none of us must be taken alive in any event; and, if a scramble does come, I will take good care that old Sir John will never live to prosecute me—or persecute me, either—any more.”

As quick as thought, Agnes left her place in the closet, and now, as Lusk and his confederate came out of the room, they found her as if half-dozing in an old, rickety chair, gazing into the badly lit, ill-cared-for London street, in which the robber had his miserable home. For a little while her mind was in a 413 whirl of excitement. Her father's life, perhaps that of the whole family, was threatened. Yes; her dear, good father, who had never in all his life said one cross word to her, and on whom she had already brought such shame and sorrow by her disobedience. Yes; was her fault to go still further, and cause his murder?

“No, no; *God* forbid; she would put him on his guard.” But oh, how could she do it in time, and so as to avoid the vigilance of her robber husband? Poor, generous, girl; she never condemned nor found fault with the unnatural, cruel and anti-Christian edicts of the English society, which condemned her fault as one not to be forgiven, even when repented of with tears of anguish like hers, so often shed. No; as became a true English girl, she bows to its heathen laws, without one doubt of their justice crossing her mind. *She* was *all* in fault; no one else had done anything wrong or un-Christian, though she should starve or be trampled to death by a villain husband. After due reflection, she determined that as soon as Lusk should leave the house, the next morning, she would make her way to her father's house, and privately see her mother, for she dare not venture to see her father, unbidden, under any pretence, and in this way put them all on their guard. That night she tried to sleep, but whenever she dozed she saw Lusk murdering her father. To her relief, morning came at length, and Lusk left at the usual hour. Not a moment was to be lost. She had from time to time, by half-starving herself, saved a few shillings out of the money given to her by Lusk for the purchase of food. This she now put in her pocket, and, instructing her son, now six years old, what to say in case his father should happen to return during her absence, she started for the railroad station; took a seat in a second-class car, and was soon at the station, which was within half a mile of her father's beautiful residence. Oh! who can imagine or describe her thoughts and feelings

as, after seven long years' absence, she walked on with trembling step toward the grand old iron gate, that opened the way through the magnificent avenue and beautiful lawn that was all hers in childhood, to love and enjoy, when the world looked a paradise before her, and when her steps were all guarded and watched as though she were heiress to a throne. She hurries on, and luckily no one notices or accosts her. She is very close to the house, when the old house dog runs out and barks at her; but now he stops, for oh, he knows his long lost, but darling mistress, for he belonged to Agnes individually, and she often thought of his having bitten Lusk the first time the fellow made so free with her as to take her hand in his. She glances all around; no one, she thinks, was looking, so she stoops and hugs the dog, as she often did, long, long ago. Then, kissing him affectionately, she hurries on, while he runs before her yelping, and rolling over and over, and making every demonstration of joy. All this is observed by Agnes' mother from an upper window of the house, and, without thinking or knowing that she recognized in the miserable girl before her her own lost child, she almost flies down the great staircase, opens her arms wide, but utters not a word. In an instant the child's arms are clasped around the mother's neck, while, in a convulsion of grief and choking sobs, she implores forgiveness. The mother, too, cries and sobs in agony, for she now, for the first time, fully realizes the terrible fate of her beautiful child. The mere skeleton she held in her arms; the wan face, and wild eyes, and miserable clothing, all tell the fearful story.

“Oh, mother, hide me from my father! I would not have come at all, but that I have a terrible thing to tell you that I could not get any one else that I could trust to explain to you.”

“Calm yourself, my poor darling,” the mother whispered; “and do not fear your father. He has had terrible dreams about you of late, and has just concluded to look you up and forgive you, which he would have done long ago, but that he feared to offend the ideas and laws of society; so, do not fear to meet him, my poor darling. Come to my own little room, and tell me all you want, and let me hold you in my lap, and rest your head in its own old place, my darling.” And so they were seated, when Agnes exclaimed:

“Oh! mother, all is now over for me in this world; I feel it *here*, and *here*,” she said, placing her hand first on her head, and then on her heart. “A few more weary days, and my task is over, and my

terrible journey finished; but oh, how happy I will be if you all forgive me before I go; and father will kiss me, and call me some of his old pet names, and that will be life enough for me.” Then, suddenly starting erect, in her mother's arms, she exclaimed: “But, mother, I am losing time, when there is no time to lose; I came to tell you something terrible.”

415

Then she, with hurried voice, related all that she had heard of the plans of the robbers, and how they had resolved not to be taken alive, and how they had planned to kill her father if there was any resistance. But she never revealed that Lusk was to be the leader of the party, or to be there at all; for, somehow, she could not bring herself to that, and it was evidently unnecessary. Her mother now insisted that she should not return to London, or any more leave her old home; but a few words from Agnes convinced her that to pursue this course would be to reveal everything to the robbers and endanger her own life, without having accomplished any good. Her mother then proposed to change her clothes; but no, that, too, would insure her discovery and destruction. Then, with an aching heart, she filled out a glass of wine, and induced Agnes to swallow it. Then, after one more silent, impassioned embrace, they parted; Agnes leaving as she had come, and no one in the whole house knew that the poor, miserable looking girl they saw, with supreme dismay, passing out of Lady Ward's room, was no other than the once favorite child of the whole family. Lady Ward had to hold the old dog with her handkerchief around his neck, or he would have followed poor Agnes back to London, and after he was liberated he whined and moaned piteously, while he lay, as if in suffering, on the ground. Just then Sir John rode up, and, as he alighted and threw the bridle-rein to the servant in waiting, the old dog rushed to him, and, looking up in his face, commenced the same piteous moaning and howling.

“Why,” said Sir John; “what is the matter with you, Nero?” The dog now redoubled his demonstrations of grief or pain, and ran down the avenue for a little way, with his nose close to the ground; then back again to Sir John; then he sat back on his haunches and gave out a long, fearful, continuous cry. Sir John regarded the old dog with astonishment, and said:

“I believe the poor old creature is going to die; but what does he mean by running down the avenue in that way?” Then turning to a servant who was approaching him, he asked: “Has any one been here lately?”

“No one, Sir John, that I have seen, except a ragged looking girl, who was, for a little time, with Lady Ward in her room.”

And then the servant told him Lady Ward wished to see him in her room.

Sir John trembled all over, and grew deadly pale. But what caused his agitation he had not the least idea. In his wife's room the mystery was soon explained. Sir John was shocked and terrified at the description of poor Agnes and her terrible misery. His manhood, for a time, forsook him, and he gave way to uncontrolled grief; as he paced up and down the room he cried out:

“Oh, I have been an unnatural father! I have allowed the cold, unnatural laws of society to govern me, and have let my child, my sweet, my poor, darling, simple child, the victim of a cunning villain, be beaten and starved to death, without once inquiring to know her fate! Oh, England, my country! why do you manufacture religion by acts of Parliament, which give us Christianity in a form so cold and icy that it can neither reach the heart nor soften down the tyranny of the rules of cold society? Oh, my child! my murdered child! forgive, forgive your father; and, oh! may God forgive me, too!”

Then suddenly he recalled the threatening danger to his house-hold, and exclaimed:

“Aye, aye; we must ward off this threatened blow.”

CHAPTER III.

A SELFISH CHILD—FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

Agnes, on leaving her mother, retraced her way to London. She took her place in the railroad car, all wild with excitement; she knew not why. She was no longer weak or trembling, as she had been approaching her old home; her step was light, as though her whole frame weighed nothing; her

vision was clear and intensely sensitive to every object, far and near; there seemed to be within her some violent contention.

“What have I done! What have I done!” she murmured to herself, as her wild, bright eyes flashed from side to side, as if seeking for sympathy or relief in the surroundings. “He is the father of my child. Yes, yes; he is, and he will be shot to-night, and I have done it. “Oh!” she continued, as her eyes were now riveted on the plain gold ring on her finger. “I swore that morning in the church to be true to him until death. Oh, God! what have I done!” As she whispered this to herself, she started to her feet, as if aroused beyond control by some bitter pang; then, dropping back into her seat, she rested her forehead, now streaming with perspiration, on her hand, and murmured: “Yes, my God; I thank Thee for the thought; if I did anything but what I have done, I would be my own father's murderer, and no vow ever made on earth is holy that would justify that.

It was late in the afternoon when Agnes found herself on the stairway to her garret home. The little boy answered her eager questions as to his father, by informing her that he had not returned. As she stooped and kissed the child, a pang again darted through her, and again she started, trembled, and became deadly pale. The boy looked at her with a strange, meaning intelligence, as he said, in a blunt way:

“I won't tell him.”

“No, of course you won't, my pet; and I have brought you a nice cake, all for yourself.” Then she kissed him, with cold lips, and he snatched the cake from her hands and ran off to devour it in his usual, selfish way, alone. Agnes, prompted by some new feeling she herself did not understand, took more pains than commonly to put things to right, and make her wretched room look its best. She looked over the scanty store of provisions on hand, hesitated for a moment, and then, drawing from her pocket bright shillings, she looked at them wistfully; then, reaching out for her old, faded shawl, she threw it over her head and darted down the stairway, murmuring to herself as she went:

“Yes; it is all I have in the world, but I will spend it for him.”

In a few moments she returned with a beefsteak, and in a short time had the evening meal prepared and all in readiness for Lusk when he should make his appearance. He came at the accustomed hour. He seemed excited, but in uncommonly good humor, and, as he glanced at the nicely prepared supper and general surroundings, he exclaimed, smilingly:

“Why, Aggie, you are getting to be a great little housekeeper; but where on earth did you find the money to get that nice, tempting beefsteak? for I believe I did not leave you a penny for the last three days.”

Agnes trembled, grew pale, but tried to smile, as she stammered out that she found two shillings in her trunk that morning. Lusk observed her agitation, and looked on her, not as of old, but with an expression of kindness and concern Agnes had never seen in his face before.

“Come, poor Aggie,” he said; “you do not look well. You and Johnny must share this steak with me to-night; come, bring the boy; there is enough for us all, and to-morrow I will have plenty of money, or” —and he stopped for a moment as if choking, but, clearing his throat, he concluded with:

“Yes, yes; to-morrow I will have plenty of money for us all, and more than we want.”

His words seemed to confuse and bewilder Agnes. She snatched up the boy in an excited way, and placed him at the table; took a seat herself, and ate in a quick, nervous way, feeling as if in a dream, for Lusk talked and laughed to-night as she had never heard him in her married life do before. It sounded strange and unnatural, and excited her almost beyond control; but, by a desperate effort of will, she kept herself within bounds, and Lusk never observed her anguish of mind. Just as their meal was finished, heavy footsteps were heard on the stairway, and presently a dark complexioned, heavy-whiskered man, in a heavy, gray overcoat, entered the room, unbidden.

“Well,” said the stranger; “you are eating; it is time we were on the move; so, hurry up, Captain.” Lusk assented, and, stepping behind a ragged curtain Agnes had hung to guard her bed from sight, he changed his clothes, and prepared himself fully for his night's work. As he did so, he now and

then exchanged a word with the stranger on the general news of the day. At the sight of this man Agnes almost swooned away, and saved herself from falling only by dropping back in her chair. There she sat, motionless and unobserved by the two men, whose whole thoughts were evidently on their own business. The boy had crawled into his little bed the moment he had finished supper, and is now fast asleep. Lusk is ready, and both men leave the room, without even a glance at Agnes, whose eyes are wild, and burning like coals of fire, while every muscle and limb is powerless to move. Just as Lusk is about to descend the stairway, he remembers Agnes, for the first time he had ever done so on such occasions. He stops, and turns back into the room. He walks to where Agnes is yet seated, motionless. He stoops, and says in a low voice:

“Agnes, if anything should happen to me, and that I never come back, you know, forgive me for all the terrible misery I brought on you; I did not intend it; I thought your father would forgive us, you know.”

Agnes struggled to speak, but her tongue refused its office, and it was well, for justice's sake, that it did, for the generous woman would have given way, and saved a villain's life had she had speech to do it. Lusk saw the struggle in her face, and continued:

“Never mind, poor Aggie; I swear I will be kind to you forevermore.” And he stooped and kissed her cold, marble cheek, and then he turned quickly to the bed of the child and stooped to kiss him, but at that moment the boy opened his eyes, and, with his little fist clenched, he struck back his father's head with all his force, crying:

“There, get away; you shan't kick me so any more.”

Lusk arose to his full height, and, looking down on the child savagely, muttered between his teeth:

“Curse the brat!”

Then he was starting down the stairway to join his 420 confederates, and the street door was heard to bang behind the robbers. At the sound, Agnes leaped from her chair as if aroused from a trance;

she flew to the stair-way, and in a moment more was in the half-lighted, dismal street; a heavy fog, which was almost rain, added to its fearful gloom; she knew the way to the railroad station, and, supposing the confederates had gone in that direction, dashed on, without either bonnet or shawl; her long, beautiful hair, which had fallen loose, streamed out behind her in the wetting atmosphere. Suddenly a stout arm arrested her progress, and then the glaring light of a policeman's lamp was on her face and person.

“Ah,” said the night-watch, in a sort of a kind voice; “young, beautiful and of rare, fine stock, too, but miserable and starved, I see. Ah, a wedding ring, too! Poor thing! Where are you going? or what do you want? Can I help you?”

Agnes at first tried to pass, but that she found impossible, and suddenly her presence of mind returned, and she realized her position. She said, mildly:

“Oh, I was trying to overtake a friend, but I see I am too late; so I will go home.”

As she turned to go, the officer said:

“Shall I see you safe back? This fog makes the night so dark that you may miss your way.”

“No, no, I thank you; I would rather go alone, so please let me.”

This was said in a voice of supplication, so the officer intruded no further, but said, as he turned away:

“God help you, poor child, whoever you are.”

Agnes thanked him, and, hurriedly retracing her steps, soon found herself again in her dismal garret, standing by the bed of her boy, with the candle in her hand, gazing down at his face. She was wet, cold and pale, with her eyes still glowing with unnatural brightness. She murmured as she gazed:

“Yes, he is gone for ever; and, oh, my God! he cursed his boy as he left him!”

Then she laid her candle down and commenced to walk up and down her garret floor, with her arms sometimes folded across her breast; sometimes both hands were clasped tightly on her forehead. At the least uncommon noise in the street she would start, and be on the point of screaming out. On, on, she walked for hours and hours, sometimes muttering to herself broken sentences, such as:

421

“When he was so kind to me to-night, why did I not go on my knees to him, and implore him to give up his terrible plot? Why did I not confess to him what I had done, and let him kill me on the spot? Oh, it would have been so much easier than to endure this terrible feeling. If I had done that, it would have saved father just as well. Oh, how can I ever hug my boy again, when it was I who—but I will not let myself think of it, for I could not help it. Oh, when will this terrible night have an end? Oh, God, be merciful, and help me!”

On, on, poor Agnes walks. She hears the clock strike two. Now her head leans forward, and her face is clasped in both her hands; she turns to her child's bed, drops on her knees, and, without removing her hands, lets her head rest forward on the bed; she tries to pray; then overcome and worn-out nature has its way, and she is fast asleep. Another hour passes, and now her whole frame seems to writhe in agony, for her dreams are of a bloody struggle between her father and her husband. With a half-scream she leaps to her feet, drenched in cold perspiration, yet half-awake; the light is dim in the room; she trembles with fear of she knows not what; then her ears catch the noise of a carriage rattling over the pavements; she starts, and exclaims:

“Ah, what carriage can that be at this hour?”

It is nothing strange, either, for London, in any hour of day or night, yet now her gaze is transfixed; she cannot move, and scarcely breathes. Yes; the carriage stops at the street door, and now Agnes hears several voices, as if in consultation; the door is opened, and some one ascends the stairs, with a firm, heavy step; that step is recognized by every nerve in her system; she drops on her knees, clasps her hand above her head, and, as the door opens, exclaims:

“Father, forgive your poor child!”

The answer is a passionate embrace, with whisperings of pet names, that tell of the overflowing of pent-up love.

In a few short hours more Agnes is in her own old room in her own old home.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ROBBERS TRAPPED—YOUNG LUSK.

When Sir John learned the danger that threatened his household from Lady Ward, it was too late to send to London for police assistance, so he had to depend on his own resources. He at once summoned to his counsel three gentlemen who were his visitors, two of whom were army officers. The whole plan of defence was soon arranged. Twenty reliable men were found to put under arms. Everything being ready, and every man well instructed and put in his place, the lights were put out at the usual hour. The trap laid for the robbers worked to a charm. A little after midnight they came in force, and found the entrance to the house much easier than they had expected. After securing the booty they sought for, they turned to descend from the window by which they had entered, when a terribly deadly fire saluted them; they were off their guard, and every one of them but one powerful fellow dropped dead on the spot. This man who escaped was evidently the leader. He dropped to the ground also on the first fire, but seemed to recover himself, and dashed off towards the avenue. In five minutes more Sir John and four of his friends were on their way to London for Agnes and her boy. In the afternoon of that day the body of a large man was found under an old oak tree, where, from the appearance of the ground and the position of the body, it was evident he had died in terrible agony. It was the body of Lusk; and this was the very tree under which he had met Agnes, to arrange for her elopement. Sir John and the old gardener were the only two who recognized the body as that of Lusk, and they kept their own counsel.

Two weeks from the day of her arrival at her old home, Agnes yielded up her blighted life. She expired, surrounded by all the loved ones of her childhood and girlhood, with her head resting on her father's bosom, and her wasted white arms clasped around his neck.

Sir John now took the greatest pains with the little boy, poor Agnes' sole bequest. He was petted by the whole household, but, somehow, he appeared without any real attachment to any one, often gave symptoms of a dark, revengeful temper, and was often singularly cruel towards animals. At twelve years of age, he was sent to a school of much reputation, where he improved in all his studies rapidly. Here, however, he got into a quarrel with one of the teachers, and on that occasion displayed such a fearfully dark temper that he was expelled. At the next school he went to, he made the same rapid progress in his studies. One day, while at this school, he came home from a walk, and reported a school fellow drowned in a deep canal in the neighborhood. His story was, that the drowned boy was his companion in the walk, and had stumbled headlong into the canal, and was drowned before he could render him any assistance. When the body was taken from the canal, it was found to be bruised and cut about the head, which caused many dark suspicions at the time, which, in after years, were revived by a woman's story of once having seen two boys in a desperate fight on the spot where the body was found, when one, she said, overpowered the other and flung him into the canal.

Young Lusk grew tall, handsome and powerful; was intelligent and bright, and, when he wished, could make himself most agreeable to men and fascinating to women. Sir John never cared to have him much at home, and now he got him a place as midshipman on board a man-of-war going on a long cruise. He was not popular with his messmates. The ship returned in one year, and on this occasion Sir John was most liberal to the midshipman in the way of money. Young Lusk dashed into all sorts of excesses, and closed his visit home by forging his grandfathers's name to a check for two hundred pounds. The grandfather discovered the forgery, though no one else did, just before the ship sailed, and summoned the boy before him, upbraided him for his crime, explained its enormity, and warned him of the consequences if he ever again was guilty of the like. Lusk asked forgiveness, and promised never again to offend. The very next time his ship returned to port, Lusk

repeated his crime; this time for a yet larger sum. Sir John again paid the forged check, without bringing the young man to justice, but gave him 424 notice that the next time the *law* should take its course, let the consequences be ever so terrible. For some two years after this all went well. Lusk stood well with his commander, and had just passed his examination with credit. He was given two weeks' leave of absence, but, instead of going to see his grandfather, he stopped in London, and dashed again into every conceivable excess and dissipation. He soon found himself involved in debt beyond all possibility of paying, and again resorted to his dexterous pen for relief. This time he forged Sir John's name to a check for two thousand pounds. Very soon after the bank had paid the check, the clerk, whose duty it was to file away all checks, as he put this in its place, happened to observe that a private mark Sir John had lately notified the bank that he had adopted was not on the check. In an instant the forgery was discovered, and, as Lusk had himself presented the check, and as his name was in the body of it, it was not hard to trace him out, so, in a few hours more, young Lusk found himself locked in jail, on a charge of forgery. The result was his conviction, and sentence to hard labor for life in the penal colonies.

The only influence his unfortunate grandfather sought to exercise in his favor was to get this sentence for him, instead of an ignominious death on the scaffold, which the laws of England at that time allowed a Judge to inflict at his discretion. The moment Lusk was sentenced, he assumed a sad, penitent deportment, and when he reached the convict ship, he wrote in this spirit to his grandfather, and begged of him to write to the Governor and prominent officials in Australia, to ask all the indulgence in his favor that it was possible to give, not inconsistent with their sense of duty. As he closed the letter, and sent it off, he exclaimed:

“Yes; I will play my part well, and that will give me an opportunity to escape. Yes; I will escape, as sure as there is a sun to shine in Australia. The fetters that could hold a man like me were never yet forged. Why, I have in my veins the noblest blood in England, mingled with the most daring, villainous blood; surely, that ought to make a villain of uncommon fame. Yes; the blood of the noble lion, mingled with the blood of the sneaking wolf, ought to produce an animal with ambition to reach out for anything, and with instincts that would make it natural for it not to hesitate to adopt any means, no matter how low and vile they might be, that would accomplish the object 425 sought

for. So, it must be my own fault if I do not reach the summit of villainy in my coming career. They do not think that I know my father's history; but I do, and I recollect his dark, villainous look, too, as he used to drag my mother around the room by the hair of her head. Oh, yes; he was a glorious old villain, but I will yet throw him in the shade. I will establish my headquarters on some island in the Pacific, and I will have a fleet of pirate ships under my command, which shall defend it, and which shall bring me riches to fill my treasury, and beautiful women to fill my harem, and the nations of the earth will at last be compelled to unite to capture me. Oh! the name of John Cameron Ward Lusk will yet be read of in history, for all time to come, and my daring exploits will dazzle and draw many a boy away from his home to follow in my career. Even Sir John shall be proud, for he can boast that his grandson is the greatest, the most powerful and most villainous robber in all the world over. I shall not change my name, for I do not want to rob good Sir John Cameron of the honor of being known as my relative.”

As Lusk concluded this picture, he chuckled and laughed aloud. Whenever the Captain or officers were present, he never forgot his part during the whole voyage to Sidney. Sir John did get such letters as Lusk had asked for sent to the Governor of the Colonies, and their influence, together with his own uniformly good conduct, obtained for him many privileges. The labor given him was of a light, easy character, and after the first year he was allowed perfect freedom for a part of each day. He never was a minute behind time in returning to his post. To all the officers he was polite, submissive, and never spoke except when spoken to, nor did he ever forget to look sad and dejected; but in his hours of freedom he had no such demeanor or look. Then he wore the fierce look of a chained tiger. In every way he could, he cultivated the acquaintance of the most desperate of the convicts, and had many of them combined in a gang sworn to obey him in everything. Among these, the most prominent was one Jack Lawson and his two sons, Ike and Mike. Jack Lawson was an old, experienced housebreaker, in London, and was once in Lusk's father's gang; and he now often entertained the son with the details of the desperate achievements and hair-breadth escapes of his father. Jack was caught at last, and was transported to the penal colonies, where, after awhile, he was 426 allowed partial freedom, which enabled him to acquire some little property and money. This enabled him to send for his two sons, and their little sister,

Lizzie, then eight years of age. The little girl he placed at a respectable boarding-school, where he paid all her bills promptly. She was now seventeen years of age, remarkably good-looking, and an intelligent girl. The father and brothers were very proud and very fond of her.

The gold discoveries in California had determined the Lawsons to emigrate to that country as soon as the father could make his escape easily. As a preliminary move, they confided Lizzie to a respectable family, who were going to San Francisco, with the understanding that she was to remain with them until called for by the father or either of the sons. About this time Jack reported to Lusk the arrival in port of an English bark, the *Blue Bell*, with a very suspicious looking Captain and a villainous looking crew, made up of all nationalities, but mostly of mulattoes and blacks from the Island of Jamaica. The Captain was a mulatto himself. He was a tall, powerful fellow, with a dark, fierce eye. He spoke English, Spanish and French, as if each was his native tongue; but, outside of that, his education was limited, scarcely enough to enable him to navigate his vessel, and he, therefore, took good care always to have a pretty well educated first officer. Lusk told his confederate, Jack, to study up this Captain as well as he could, and report to him. The next day Jack brought the news that the Captain of the *Blue Bell* wanted some writing done, for which he was willing to pay well, and that he had told him of Lusk, and that the Captain had agreed to an interview, at a hotel near to where they then stood at that hour. Lusk lost no time in accompanying Jack to the Captain's room. On being introduced to each other, their eyes met in a steady, unflinching gaze for an instant. In that gaze Lusk found nothing that made him fear the Captain; no, the feeling that ran through him was rather one of contempt, as he said to himself:

“I can handle that chap easily enough.”

The feeling that struck the Captain was the consciousness that in the man before him he had met his match in everything, and far over his match in villainy, and an undefined fear for a moment held him silent. Lusk threw himself into a chair in a careless way, saying:

427

“My friend tells me, Captain, that you want some writing done. Can I be of any service to you?”

“Yes; if you are skilled in the pen, and do not give yourself the trouble to talk about other people's business when you are paid to hold your tongue.”

“Well put in, Captain; I understand you, and you can depend on me, for I know a way you can oblige me more than I can repay you by doing this writing, whatever it may be, and for holding my tongue also.”

The Captain bowed, and, without further ceremony, told Lusk that he wanted a full set of American papers made out for his ship, “as it was,” he said, in a careless way, “convenient for him to sail sometimes under American colors, and, in case he was overhauled, he wanted to be found all right, you know.”

Lusk said “the idea was a first-rate one,” and agreed to go to the Custom House and get a look at some American ship's papers, and copy them exactly. The name of the bark in the American papers was to be the “Eagle, of New York, Jones, master.”

Lusk appeared the following Sunday, that being the day agreed upon to meet again, with a beautifully executed set of papers for the “Bark Eagle, of New York, Jones, master.”

“Why, you are skillful with the pen, sure enough,” exclaimed the Captain.

“Yes,” said Lusk, while a smile curled on his lips; “and it was that skill that brought me to this cursed colony.”

“Aye, surely; I now remember to have heard of that little circumstance,” said the Captain, laughing. “Well, how can I oblige you, Mr. Lusk, for all this work, and for your silence also, you know?”

“Simply by taking me into your employment.”

“Aye, Mr. Lusk; but you know there is risk about that.”

“I know,” said Lusk, carelessly; “but not much, and if that and much more could not be accomplished by you and myself when we put our heads together, in a little matter of business, you are not fit to be Captain of the enterprising little crowd you have on board the Blue Bell; nor am I fit to enter into your employment.”

“You seem to understand the sort of trade the Blue Bell is destined for, Mr. Lusk,” said the Captain, in the same tone Lusk had spoken in.

428

“Perfectly, my dear Captain; I dreamed of you before you came here; I longed to be in your service. My profession, you know, bids me take to the sea as my battle-field, for I have an account to settle with “society” which I am most anxious to square up. There is a glorious chance for a beginning on the coast, between Panama and San Francisco. Look there, my dear fellow,” said he, drawing from his pocket a copy of the *Alta-California*, a newspaper of San Francisco, dated February, 1850, and pointing to a paragraph which was a summary of the amount of gold shipped within the last three months, via Panama. As the Captain perused the paragraph, Lusk continued: “Any one of these shipments would make a nice beginning for you and for those under your command.”

“What can a sailing vessel do with a steamer, and that steamer full of armed Yankees, who would rather fight than eat if they had a choice?”

“Throw yourself in the track of the steamer and pretend to be in distress until you get your guns bearing right on her broadside; then demand submission or sink her. Let the passengers be ever so brave, they will be all unprepared and will be incumbered, moreover, with a crowd of women and children. Just to show them that you mean business, send a shot or two through their upper works, and, my head for it, she will hand out the treasure. Yes, Captain; put fifty first-class men on your deck, and to capture three, at least, of those steamers, one after the other, is just no trick at all. After that, the coast might be a little too hot for us, and we would have to run out of the way for a few months; that is all.”

“I confess,” said the Captain, “that your plan looks well, but can we get the additional crew here of the right stamp of men?”

“I have twenty such, bound to follow my fortunes to the end of the world, and we can easily plan a way of getting them on board the Blue Bell some dark night after she is ready for sea.”

The Captain remained in thought for a minute or two, and then said:

“What position, Mr. Lusk, would you expect on board my ship in the event of my accepting your offer?”

“First mate,” promptly answered Lusk.

“Well, if everything else fits, that will not be hard to give 429 you, as we lost our first mate overboard in a storm just before reaching port, and have not yet supplied his place; so to-morrow I will meet you here and either close with you or decline your proposition, for I must consult with my crew.”

The next day Captain Sam Jackson, of the bark Blue Bell, met Lusk and accepted his proposition. In ten days from that day, Lusk, by a special favor, got two days' leave of absence, and when they had expired he did not return to his post, for he was far out at sea, with his Sydney recruits, on board the Blue Bell, almost all of whom were escaped convicts, under the command of Captain Sam Jackson.

CHAPTER V.

ESCAPE—CAPTURE OF A CHILEAN VESSEL—THE FIGHT.

The escape of Lusk and his men, as related in the last chapter, was not such a difficult feat to perform, for in those days the Australian authorities seemed to connive at convicts escaping, provided they went to California and not to England. The Blue Bell was English-built, but on the American model. Her masts raked; she was clipper-rigged, and evidently a remarkably fine

sailer. They had fifty able-bodied men on board, four brass cannon, and were well provided with ammunition and small arms. Every calm day Lusk drilled the men, both in the use of the guns, and also of the sword and revolver. He showed such superior knowledge, not only in gunnery, but in all that related to navigation, that, naturally, the crew began to look up to him as the real leader, and to scarcely notice the Captain. The Captain was quick to observe this, and he began to fear and hate his first officer. To counteract the current he plainly saw setting in against him, he spoke, privately, to many of his old crew, and hinted that they must watch Lusk closely, because he was beginning to suspect that he was a traitor, and would some day sell them all at a price. In this way he secured the loyalty to himself of a majority of the crew, and only waited a favorable opportunity to rid himself of his rival. Lusk felt his power over the crew, and, although he saw the Captain's jealous eye often on him with no friendly expression in it, yet he treated this jealousy with contempt, privately making up his mind to rid himself of the Captain and his favorite followers as soon as he could do it safely. So passed the first month at sea, and every day it became more and more evident that the Blue Bell could not hold two such men as Captain Jackson and Lusk at the same time. Each now had his particular friends among the crew, warned to keep armed and on the watch. The Sydney convicts 431 were all with Lusk, particularly the Lawsons. The intention of Captain Jackson, on leaving Sydney, was not to interfere with any vessel until after the capture of two or three Panama steamers; but now he proposed that they should overhaul the first ship they met, "just to keep their hand in and get a little spending money." His real object was that he hoped it would give him an opportunity of, in some way, getting rid of Lusk, whose presence had now become intolerable to him. His plan was to give the command of the boarding party, when taking possession of the prize, to Lusk, and then abandon him to his fate, whatever that might be. To this new proposition of the Captain Lusk assented readily, because he hoped it might give him some chance of getting rid of Jackson and his friends, although he had no particular plan or idea as to how it could bring that about. The next day after coming to this understanding, a sail was sighted from the look-out on the main topmast. The Blue Bell was not long in overhauling her, and they brought her to by firing a gun across her bows. She showed Chilean colors and now the Blue Bell ran up the terrible black flag and lowered two boats, which were soon filled with armed men, under the command of Lusk. Captain Jackson supposed that Lusk would have chosen his own friends to accompany him; but,

instead of doing so, he chose the particular friends of the Captain. This ended the idea of being able to abandon Lusk, as the Captain had resolved to do. The boats pulled off, with a loud shout from their savage crews. On reaching the doomed ship, they leaped on board, and without mercy shot down every man in sight. Lusk and four men quickly descended to the cabin, where they found the Chilean Captain supporting a beautiful girl and trying to encourage her. Lusk, assuming a mock civility, requested the Captain to be good enough to hand out all the money and valuables on board. Lusk had spoken in Spanish; so a momentary hope animated the Captain while he replied:

“Willingly, sir, if you spare the remaining lives on board.”

“Surely, Captain, you cannot suppose that we would spill blood unnecessarily; so please, sir, hand out the money and other valuables.”

The Captain now unlocked his safe, and handed out a bag of Spanish doubloons to the value of some ten thousand dollars. Then he handed out a box of jewelry and considerable silver plate. Lusk gave orders for the removal of all this to his boat, 432 which being done, he ordered two of his men to conduct the beautiful, half-fainting girl also to his boat. She called out: “Father! father! Come! come!” The Captain attempted to follow, but Lusk, with a half-smile, said: “No, no, Captain; I have more business with you yet, sir.” Then in English he spoke to the two men yet with him, saying: “Lash him fast to that,” as he pointed to the part of the mast that went through the cabin, and continued: “Then scuttle the vessel, and I will hold one of the boats for you until you come.” As Lusk reached the deck he deliberately fastened down an iron grating over the cabin gangway, closing it effectually, and then, walking to the two hatchways, he closed them down also, and ran the bars in to fasten them. This done, he leaped down the side of the vessel into his boat, taking his seat by the side of the captive girl, murmuring to himself, as he did so: “There, I am rid of two of Jackson's head devils.”

He now held the boat in its place on the pretence that he was waiting for the two seamen and the Spanish Captain to make their appearance. As he sat waiting, he tried to appease the girl by assuring her that her father would come very soon. The Chilean vessel began to fall from side to side; then

she staggered like a wounded man. At this moment Lusk gave orders to “pull away,” and it was well for him he did, for in one minute more the fated craft had disappeared in the roaring water, and Lusk barely saved his boat from being engulfed with her. The girl fainted, and did not come completely to herself until Lusk laid her out of his arms on the deck of the Blue Bell. She now sat up, and called wildly for her father. Lusk besought her to calm herself, assuring her that the death of her father was an accident; but she wept and mourned, and would listen to nothing. Captain Jackson now made his appearance, for he had been in the cabin, laying away the money and other valuables captured, in safety. He walked directly over to where the girl and Lusk sat, and for a moment regarded the girl with astonishment and evident admiration. Then, suddenly turning to Lusk, he said, in English:

“I thank you for bringing *me* this girl, Mr. Lusk. I will treat her well. She shall be our queen, you know, and all shall respect her. After a few days, she will become satisfied with her new position; so come, let us conduct her to my stateroom, where she can take some rest. I will manage the thing by degrees, you know.”

433

“You are mistaken, Captain,” said Lusk, in a voice in which there was not the least excitement. “I did not bring the girl for *you*; I brought her for myself; and, what is more, I am going to keep her for myself.”

The Captain grew red, then pale with rage, and, drawing his revolver, he leveled it at Lusk's head, saying:

“Dog, do you undertake to disobey your Captain? Rise, sir, instantly, and take that girl to my stateroom, or you are a dead man.”

Lusk, continuing without the least show of excitement, arose slowly to his feet; but the instant he was erect, with a motion as quick as that of a wildcat, he knocked the pistol out of the Captain's hand, and grasped him by the throat with the grip of a vise. The whole crew now flew to the scene

of the struggle. Some fought for Jackson, some fought for Lusk. A blow from some one loosened Lusk's hold on the Captain, who now called out:

“Overboard with every Sidney convict!”

“Down with the accursed negro and his band!” called out half a dozen voices on Lusk's side.

Now hand to hand they fought with the ferocity of fiends. Now Jackson falls, and the Jamaicans give way and fly down the hatchway. Lusk, with scarce a scratch, stands on the deck victorious, with all that are alive of his friends around him. Thirty men lay on the deck dead or dying, and Captain Jackson among them. The first thing Lusk did was to order the hatchway closed down. This done, he turned to look for the poor girl who was the immediate cause of the fight. She was lying motionless on her face and hands. He walked hurriedly to her, and, raising her, found she was perfectly dead. A stray bullet had passed through her body, and sent her to her *God*. Her prayer was heard, which she had never ceased to repeat after leaving her father, imploring God to take her out of the hands of the pirates, and it was a merciful deliverance from the terrible fate that threatened her. When Lusk saw she was dead, he turned away, apparently unconcerned. Jack Lawson looked at her. Perhaps a thought of his own handsome child crossed his mind, for he paused a moment in thought, while a sad expression passed over his rough features. Then he turned away, but soon returned with Mike, his son, bringing a new piece of canvas and a heavy gun shot. As they both now arranged the beautiful 434 form of the dead girl in the canvas, with the bullet at her feet, all their actions betokened respect and tenderness.

“Yes,” murmured the old man; “I do this for Lizzie's sake.”

Soon the canvas was sewed up, and now they lift her gently over the side of the vessel, and slowly let her drop into the terrible dark deep, that so reminds us of eternity. While Jack and his son were thus engaged, Lusk was superintending the clearing of the deck of the dead and wounded. The dead and the wounded both, of those who fell on the Captain's side in the fight, he ordered overboard as fast as a gun shot could be fastened to each. When he came to Jackson's body, he said, laughing:

“Put a double shot on that old rascal; I want him to go beyond the sound of Gabriel's trumpet.”

His own dead friends were disposed of with hardly more show of feeling, the only difference being that two men who were badly wounded, on his side, were properly cared for. The deck now being cleared, the hatchways were thrown open, and the remainder of Jackson's men were decoyed on deck with fair promises; but, the moment they were in his power, he ordered them bound hand and foot, and, with a shot fastened to their necks, hurried them overboard, sparing only a boy of fifteen years old, who was always afterwards known among the crew as “Johnny Lucky.” This boy was particularly attached afterwards to the Lawsons, as it was through Jack's interference he had been spared.

That evening Lusk seemed silent and thoughtful. Early the next morning he assembled his men; got a formal vote from them declaring him their Captain, and Jack Lawson their first mate. Then he proposed that they should, for the present, assume the appearance of peaceful traders, stow away their guns and hide all appearance of being armed; then run to one of the Pacific islands, and take on board a deck load of hogs. These were easily to be had, he said, and were reported to be very scarce in California. Then, after they had procured the cargo, he proposed they should sail directly for San Francisco. Their crew was so small now that, of course, the attempt to overhaul a Panama steamer was out of the question until they had more men. He then represented to his crew that in San Francisco the people were completely off their guard, as hardly any thieves 435 had made their appearance there as yet, and that it would, therefore, be no trick at all to pick up a hundred thousand or so before the Yankees would realize that gentlemen of their talents were among them. All he said was approved of by the crew, to whom he now administered a solemn oath of obedience to himself. After this all worked to a charm. Lusk felt as though his career had fairly commenced, and was most zealous in attending to all his duties, and disciplining his men. He announced to his crew that while among the Americans he was to be known simply as “Captain John Ward,” dropping for the present his other two names.

They succeeded in getting a fine cargo of hogs, and had a prosperous run to San Francisco, where they dropped anchor in May, 1850. The hogs were easily sold at a large profit. Captain Ward then

moved his vessel to a safe anchorage near Saucelito, in Richardson's Bay, and took all his valuables on shore, and buried them in a little grove of oaks that grew on a promontory half a mile or more east of the famous watering place for ships in those days. This promontory was known afterwards for a long time as "Pirates' Point." Leaving a disabled seaman on board as shipkeeper, all prepared to go on shore. Before separating, Ward gave each of his men \$500. A place of meeting was agreed on, where they were all to assemble one week from that day. On reaching the shore, Jack Lawson accompanied the Captain to Burgoyne & Co.'s bank, where they deposited the remainder of the money on hand in Ward's name. Jack then asked the Captain to help him to find his daughter, Lizzie, and he, having nothing in particular to do, accepted the invitation. After a little inquiry, they found her with the family with whom she had come from Australia. Lizzie was overjoyed to see her father so much sooner than she expected. Jack introduced Captain Ward to her, who seemed very much pleased with her, and they all three remained laughing and talking together for a long time. On leaving, the Captain asked Lizzie to go to the theater with him that evening. Her father approved of her going, so she accepted the invitation, and the unfortunate father went away much pleased. Lizzie was not what could be called beautiful by any means, but she was a well-formed English girl, in vigorous health, with the beauty that youth and health bestow. She was very genteel-looking, considering her origin; had a 436 good, plain education, and a merry, light heart, for she knew nothing of the real character of her father and brothers. Both of her brothers called to see her later in the day, and when they heard of Captain Ward's invitation they started and looked at each other in half-alarm; then Ike said:

"Lizzie, if father said so, I suppose you must go; but don't go in a hurry again, and look out for the Captain."

"Well," said Lizzie; "if you think that way, I will get him to take a lady friend of mine with us."

"Yes; that will do," Ike said. And the brothers left. As they gained the street, one of them said:

"If harm comes to Lizzie, it were better for the Captain, a thousand times, if he had never been born."

The Captain came that evening, and found himself compelled to invite Lizzie's friend. He saw through her caution, and it aroused in him a determination to triumph over such precautions. From day to day he visited her, but she was always on her guard, and he grew half-angry with himself for his want of success. He now assumed the bearing towards her of a respectful, devoted lover. He made her valuable presents, of which she told her father, and he was pleased, and praised the Captain, as he believed him really in love with Lizzie. The same caution always pervaded Lizzie's intercourse with Ward, and he attributed this to the influence of the lady with whom she lived; so he induced her father to change her boarding-house to a fashionable one, at that time kept by a Miss Scott, a highly respectable maiden lady from New York. Here the Captain continued his devoted attention, and seemed better pleased with his progress, as now Lizzie showed a greater taste for dress, and sometimes accepted an invitation from him to go to the theater. During these summer months of 1850, Ward had fully organized his band of house-breakers and robbers, and every day the people were startled with announcements of a new and daring robbery, or murder and robbery, both. Ward was one of the most active men in trying to ferret out the perpetrators, but of course never succeeded. For a long time the place of "rendezvous" of Ward's gang was a set of poor little rickety buildings that Robert Wells & Co. had built on about the line of Stockton street, on the southwest side of Telegraph Hill, not far from the old Pioneer grave-yard. They were painted lead color, or bluish. 437 These buildings were so poorly constructed that the prevailing wind of that district always raked through them, so that no one cared to occupy them. Ward chose them for his headquarters because they were in a lonesome, out-of-the-way spot. One of Ward's movements was to put himself in communication with the leading spirits of the Mexican gang of robbers and murderers, whose operations were mostly conducted in the lonesome roads approaching the larger towns of the State. His intimacy with the Americans enabled him to give the Mexicans such information as they required, to enable them to carry on their villainous business with profit, in which he, of course, shared. It was in this way two young men of the name of Cary were decoyed south of San Juan, in Monterey county, and murdered and robbed, with shocking brutality, and many others, whose fate to this day is wrapped in mystery. Ward augmented his band by recruits from among the "Sydney coves," as the English convict immigrants were universally called in San Francisco at that time. His band is said to have numbered between forty and fifty when in its highest

success, and to have had some women members; at least, it came to light that in some of the most daring robberies, women had taken a part; but it may have been that in these cases the women were only tools in the hands of individual members of the gang. Among Ward's new recruits was a well-educated young man, calling himself Frederick Brown, and who generally passed himself off as an American or a Canadian, but who, in fact, was an escaped convict from Australia, where he had been sent on conviction of an infamous crime. Brown had been for six months in the northern mines, but was not fortunate, and was now back in San Francisco "broke," when he fell in with Ward, who recollected having seen him when a convict in Australia. They were soon fast friends, and, on entering the gang, Brown assumed the position of scribe, or secretary, at their meetings, and he acted in the same capacity for individual members who wished to write letters to their friends in England. Ward feared to let his gang go too fast, as the people of San Francisco began to get very restive under his terrible, systematically-conducted robberies, and he feared the rising of the whole people, *en masse*, in an effort to protect themselves. He had no fear of the authorities, for he knew they were busily engaged in their own little game of robbing the city treasury, and fleecing the city of her real estate. Taking this view of the matter, Ward gave orders to suspend operations in the city for a time, and, announced to his followers that he would himself take this opportunity of visiting the large towns in the State, and the mining regions in general, to see what could be done in that direction, as soon as it would be safe for them to renew their work. So, leaving San Francisco a season of quiet, Captain Ward and his friend Brown departed for the city of Sacramento.

CHAPTER VI.

NEWS FROM WALTER—MRS. LIGHTHEAD

For seven long months after the ship sailed away from the port of New York with Walter on board, things progressed in the Wagner family just as they had done ever since the father met the terrible accident, except that Walter was not there to read for them in the evening. To pass this off, Minnie's tongue ran on with incessant talking, asking questions, and getting her mother to relate stories of the Irish patriots, and their often narrow escapes from the minions of English power. Then, as her father gained strength, she would get him to tell them some stories of the American revolution he

had heard his father relate. So Minnie, in her efforts to direct her parents' thoughts from the sad loss of Walter's company, made herself happy. After the third month, the father sat up for a few hours each day; but the broken bones did not seem to mend as they should, for he was yet unable to use his lower limbs. He gradually wasted away to a perfect skeleton, and plainly observed that his end was near; but he was calm and satisfied, as he was very religious. One day, in the last of the seventh month of Walter's absence, there was a knock at the door. Minnie arose from her work on the shirts, and went to answer the knock. On opening the door, there stood Mr. Roman's clerk, holding out a letter to her. She knew the handwriting. It was Walter's. She gave a half-scream, but could not take the letter or move from the spot where she stood. The clerk understood her perfectly, and said:

“Don't be afraid, Miss Minnie. Your brother is in San Francisco safe and well, and doing well.”

“Thank God!” exclaimed the mother, who had rushed to the door on hearing Minnie's cry.

We will not follow mother and daughter back to the little sitting room, where the father lies sick in bed, or attempt to describe a scene we should not be present at. No; let us close the 440 door, and walk away with Mr. Roman's clerk, content to enjoy in imagination all the great happiness brought to these dear, good people in Walter's first letter. From this day forward every steamer arrival, without fail, brought a letter from Walter. Sometimes long and sometimes short, just as he could command time, and always a draft, small or large, was inclosed “to help to drive shirt-making from the house,” as Walter expressed it. Minnie entered heart and soul into all Walter's schemes for making money, as related in his letters. As he wrote home of each new plan, her hopes went up to the highest pitch. Then, as he announced his failure, her heart sank; but it was soon, like Walter's own, up again, and once more buoyant with the brightest anticipations. Often and often, after reading one of his letters, filled with some new project, she would be so excited all day that she could not eat or sleep at night; or, if her eyes did close, she was in dreams by Walter's side, digging out gold by the panful at a time. The Wagners no longer took in shirts to make, and this was a sort of heaven in itself. Mrs. Wagner's health improved, but the poor husband gradually wasted away, in spite of every effort in his behalf, until at length he left them. He was perfectly resigned, and died blessing God for all his mercies, but particularly for the great comforts granted

to him through his wife and children in his last long sickness. He sent his blessing with a long message to Walter, committing to his care his darling mother and Minnie. Sad was Minnie's letter conveying this news to poor Walter, who for a time was completely unmanned by it. But the new responsibility thrown on him aroused him to his usual activity and untiring exertion. A little after this, Minnie received the letter from Walter giving her the particulars of his partnership with Isaac Hilton, in High Canyon, near Downieville. The greatest longing seized her mind to go and join Walter at his place of business.

“Yes,” she said; “I see clearly where Walter fails. He will not persevere in one line of business. If I was near him, I could influence him in this respect, and that would be of a great advantage, for I feel certain that if he only would remain in his present location with this Mr. Hilton, he would be rich very soon.” Then, after further reflection, she would run on: “After I was fairly settled, we could send for mother; then we would all be together. Oh! would not that be heavenly?”

Minnie had that day heard of a California grass widow who was to go to her husband in San Francisco; so she could resist no longer telling her mother her thoughts. To her surprise, her mother thought the plan a good one, and that Minnie's influence over Walter would correct what was apparently his only fault. Uncle John was now consulted, and, after due consideration, he, too, advocated the plan. When alone with his sister-in-law, he said:

“Not so much for the reasons you and Minnie give, but that I favor every woman who has a husband, father or brother in California going there. It will help to keep society out there from growing wild, and will aid the good and the brave, who are striving to build up an American State on the Pacific side of the mountains, in their good work. A girl like her is worth more to California just at this time than fifty men would be; and, for my part, I am disgusted at the way women are holding back, though in many cases it is undoubtedly the fault of the men. So, I say, let Minnie go, and you, Ann, can rent the cottage to some one, and live with me; or I will take the cottage, as my lease where I am will soon expire, and you and I can settle in regard to rent and board between us. In this respect, do just as you choose yourself.”

“Oh, John, I will take your last offer, for that is just what will suit me in every way.”

And so it was arranged.

Minnie's heart is now leaping within her with almost wild excitement. A new life is opened to her view. She loves California already. She knows it all over; for has she not read every scrap of history that has lately been published in regard to it? And has she not read, and almost studied, the San Francisco newspapers which Mr. Roman has been kind enough to lend to her? Has she not, in imagination, gone through all Walter's enterprises with him, spurring him on when success seemed sure; then arousing him, when defeat came, to renewed efforts to conquer fortune? Yes; all this is so. And now in this new enterprise that Walter has just written to her about she is to be his helpmate, right by his side, in reality, and not in imagination, as heretofore. She saw no danger before her. The journey seemed as nothing. Minnie had heard of many sad disappointments in families where the head had gone to California, and of many a letter in a stranger's handwriting having come to hopeful friends, announcing the sad news that he 442 whose life was all in all to them lay buried in some lonesome little spot away, far away, in California's rugged mountains. But, undaunted, she now turns her face to the setting sun, and never thought of looking back or hesitating. Uncle John soon found an escort for Minnie in a Mrs. Lighthouse, who was going in the next steamer but one to San Francisco to join her husband, who was residing there. This lady was represented to him as the wife of a worthy and good man, so he supposed she was all right, and was glad when Mrs. Lighthouse agreed to take Minnie under her charge as far as San Francisco. Uncle John then went to the office of the steamship company, and secured a berth for Minnie in the same stateroom as her escort. By the mail just leaving for California, Minnie wrote to Walter that she would follow the letter in the next steamer, and that he must be sure to meet her in San Francisco. At the same time she gave him all the reasons for this sudden move. She knew Walter would be overjoyed to hear what she wrote him. It afterwards turned out that Walter never got this letter. It was lost, most likely somewhere between San Francisco and Downieville, and Walter therefore remained in perfect ignorance of Minnie's movements. The appointed day came, and Minnie found herself seated near her escort on the deck of the Panama steamer, as it dashed out of New York

harbor, and taking her out of sight of the dear old hills of her native State, and of every locality that was dear to her in childhood. But Minnie was not one to mourn over the past. No; her young heart was full of the future. It was all a gorgeous panorama to her vision, made only more charming because there were some difficulties to surmount, some shadows on the picture for her to work at, and strive to clear away.

Minnie now took a good look at her escort as she entered into conversation with her. She was anxious to ascertain with what sort of a companion chance had thrown her, where all were strangers to her. Miss Lighthouse was rather a good-looking lady, of about thirty years of age. Minnie was surprised to see her very richly dressed; which she thought looked quite out of place on an occasion like this. Besides a handsome silk dress, she wore showy diamond ear-rings, a breastpin, and two large diamond rings on her fingers, and a gold watch, with a bunch of showy charms; but the most conspicuous ornament, if ornament you could call it, was a heavy gold watch chain. It was of the 443 regular ox-chain pattern, but very large; each link had at least twenty dollars worth of gold in it. Such chains were often seen in California at that time, but mostly about the necks of fancy stage-drivers, horsemen and such people. Minnie's natural good taste, which was always conspicuous in her own way of dressing, shrunk from all this sort of display.

"There is a time for all things," she thought to herself, "but surely this is not the time or place for that dress or those ornaments. I am afraid I have a miserable companion for my voyage, but I will do the best I can."

The passengers were mostly putting their staterooms in order, and all, with a little anxiety, were trying to find out what sort of companions chance gave them for room-mates. So there were but few on deck, and those that were there seemed buried and lost in their thoughts, looking sad and lonesome. Minnie made some casual remark by way of opening the conversation, which Mrs. Lighthouse did not notice, but said:

“So far I do not see many nice people on board. A lady friend of mine who has just returned from California, where her husband is very rich, told me I would find ever so many nice gentlemen and handsomely dressed ladies on board the steamers.”

“A lady *returned* from California, did you say, Mrs. Light head?”

“Oh, yes; she went out there, but only staid one month. San Francisco, she says, is a horrible windy, sandy place, entirely unfit for rich people, who have the means, you know, my dear, to enjoy themselves.”

Here Mrs. Lighthhead gave a toss of her head that shook her ear-rings, while she wound a foot or so of her ox chain around her hand.

“But her husband is in San Francisco, you say?”

“Oh, yes, her husband is there; but what of that? He can send her money and she can enjoy herself so much better at home.”

Minnie now felt a sort of cold, creeping sensation pass through her, as though a snake had drawn its slimy form across her feet, and that as in a dream she could not get away; but, recovering herself, she said:

“But you are going to San Francisco to live, Mrs. Lighthhead?”

“Oh, I am going there, but as to my staying there, that 444 depends on how I like it. My husband has gone through terrible privations to make his money, and you may be sure I will live where I can enjoy it the most; and then this lady friend of mine I spoke of, said the trip out there and back would be a most enjoyable way of passing time. There were, she said, so many dashing beaux always on board the steamers.”

Here Mrs. Lighthouse fixed her dress and arranged her hat, as she continued, while looking all around:

“Though, I confess, I have not seen one yet.”

“Where is your little boy, Mrs. Lighthouse? I understood your uncle to say that you had a beautiful, intelligent boy, six years old, and I promised myself great pleasure with him in helping you to take care of him, and in watching his movements among the passengers and sailors. We could so enjoy his astonishment at everything so new to him.”

“Where is he?” said Mrs. Lighthouse, in a half-angry, surprised tone of voice. “Why, of course, he is safe with his grandmother, on Long Island. I thought the child would go into convulsions, he roared so when I left him; but he will soon get over that, and I was not such a fool as to tag a boy to California with me. I know I won't stay there, and if I do there will be plenty of time to send for him.”

Minnie now began to get an insight into the true character of her companion, and it was with a feeling of deep disappointment and almost disgust that she continued the conversation, saying:

“But will not his father be expecting him?”

“Oh, yes; he is a perfect fool about the child, and I took care not to tell him I was going to leave him behind. He would have made such a fuss about it, and perhaps I would have had to bring him, and that would have just spoiled all my pleasure, and you know it makes one look so old to be showing off a boy of six. No, indeed; my husband has made money, and I am going to enjoy it while I can.”

“How long has your husband been in California, Mrs. Lighthouse?”

“Oh, he went there early in forty-nine, and had, he says, a terrible lonesome time of it, boarding around in ill-kept restaurants and coffee-houses, and at night forced to lie down in a bed not fit for a Christian to sleep on. When he went to California he wanted me to go with him, and has been

writing to me ever since to induce me to come and bring little Willie with me; 445 promising a nice little home for us, all fixed up comfortably, and all that of talk. But he sent me plenty of money, and I had just as good a thing as I wanted; so I positively refused to go until now. I suppose he will have some sort of a cottage or shanty all ready to receive me, but I rather think he will find himself mistaken in thinking that I will stay out there long, for it is not in my nature to endure discomforts; and then what are men for,” she ran, growing warm on the subject, “if not to provide their wives with the comforts of life. I think that is their business, and that we women should insist on it.”

Seeing that Minnie gave no apparent assent to this proposition, she concluded with: “Well, it is my view, anyway, and is the view, too, taken by most of the California widows; and I have just a perfect pity and contempt for those wives who went in forty-nine, with their love-sick, romantic notions of ‘standing by their husbands in their trials and privations,’ and worrying themselves to death out there watching and taking care of men, as though God meant women to have any hard work or particular business to do in this world.”

How Minnie's blood boiled in her veins, in indignation at the low, degraded sphere this woman claimed for the whole sex. Her thoughts flashed back on the beautiful life of her own mother, and a flash of pride lit up her bright eyes, as, in an instant, she reviewed it, and her own short life, and could find nothing in either to justify a belief in such an idea, as that God had not made women for just as high and important a sphere of duties as he had men, even if the duties were to be totally of a different character. She was about to reply to Mrs. Lighthouse, but she checked herself, saying in her own mind: “This woman could never comprehend my views, so let her go. I pity her poor husband. Oh, how he will feel when he finds his little Willie was left screaming behind. Oh, this creature of a woman is a sort of relation, I think, of the Russian woman, who, to save her own life, threw her children, one by one, to the wolves pursuing her! Whenever I see a mother neglect her child through selfishness, I somehow think of that Russian monster.”

The wind was now blowing fresh and cold, and Mrs. Lighthouse exclaimed:

“Miss Wagner, I do believe I am getting a little sick; suppose we go to our stateroom?”

Minnie was glad enough to end the conversation with her 446 escort, and followed her to the stateroom, bitterly disappointed in her character, as disclosed by this first conversation. They both proved good sailors, and suffered very little from sea-sickness, either that night or afterwards. The next day came calm and beautiful, and most of the passengers were on deck.

When Mrs. Lighthouse and Minnie were seated near each other, as on the day before, Mrs. Lighthouse seemed to regard Minnie very closely for some minutes; then, assuming a patronizing, motherly sort of a tone, said:

“My dear, you are very, very, handsome; which, of course, you know; for we all know when we are very handsome, though we don't pretend to know it, for it makes a better impression on others not to appear to know it. Now, for instance, it would be foolish in me to deny, just here between ourselves, that I am very handsome, yet I pretend not to know it. But, as I was saying, you are very handsome, and of course you are going to California just to make your market; in other words, to get a rich husband.”

Minnie could not help firing up at this coarse address, so she broke in:

“I assure you, Mrs. Lighthouse, you never were more mistaken in your life. I have no consciousness of this beauty you talk of, and I am going to California to keep house for my brother, and I never thought of such a mean thing as that you speak of.”

“*Mean*, child! There is nothing mean about it.”

“I think there is, Mrs. Lighthouse, and I assure you that you do me a great injustice.”

“Injustice, child! Why, I accuse you of nothing that is wrong. What is there that is wrong in getting a rich husband? Nothing whatever; but much that is commendable, for it is on riches, after all, that we are to depend for everything good in this world. It is better than education, though that is, of course, necessary to a limited extent. It is better than intelligence, for who cares for an intelligent person if he is not rich? It is even better than beauty; for, though that is better than either education

or intelligence, yet riches will bring us more friends and pleasures of every sort than either. And then, you know, the occasional faults of rich people are overlooked, for every one knows that a rich person, either man or woman, is excused, and in fact has rights where the poor creatures who have nothing 447 would be condemned out of hand. So, my dear, don't be ashamed of this move of yours to get a rich husband. It is just what you should do with that beauty of yours. Put it in the market. Yes, put it in the market; and sell it for the highest price. Don't mind about age, or good looks, or anything in fact, if you are sure the man *is rich*. For if you are obliged to take an old fellow, you can easily hoodwink him and have your quiet little fun out of sight; and if you are obliged to take an ill-tempered young fellow who has nothing to inspire either your respect or love, why take some good opportunity to kick up a fuss with him, get a divorce and half his property; then you are all right, and can marry somebody you really like, for there are a great many men who prefer divorced women. I have a friend who is suing for a divorce under just these circumstances. She married a very rich man who she knew was ill-tempered and a drunkard. She is making out a beautiful case against him of ill-usage and all that sort of thing; and the best of the joke is, that she is engaged to be married again to the attorney who is conducting her case. Now, my dear," continued Mrs. Lighthead, assuming a very important, dignified look, "I have entered into this discussion to give you all these hints and advice because I wish you well, as Mrs. Roman assured me that your family were very worthy people; and you owe it to them, my dear, not to fool your beauty away. No, no; be sure you get its full value in gold. I have a great tact for drawing gentlemen around me, and I will introduce them to you, and it may be that there is here on board this steamer some returned Californian who is rich and worth looking after; so dress in your best and set off your good looks to the best advantage, and I will do all I can to help you while you are under my charge."

While Mrs. Lighthead ran on, thus developing her ideas of the duties and aims of woman, Minnie's disgust and indignation were such that she could hardly listen with common patience, for every sentiment of her genuine womanhood was offended. However, commanding herself as well as it was possible, she said, in a decided, though somewhat tremulous voice:

"Mrs. Lighthead, let me again assure you that you misconceive me altogether. I neither want a rich husband, nor a poor one. My brother in California needs my sisterly care and assistance, and he

shall have both as long as they are of any use to him; for he is my darling brother, and his success is my success, 448 and mine is his; nor shall any claim of another's come to interfere with this—the sole object of my going to California. Do please spare yourself the trouble of introducing me to any one. All I ask is to pass unnoticed on this passage to San Francisco, where I am to meet my brother.” And Minnie could not refrain from adding: “I see that your ideas as to the duties of our sex are altogether different from those of my mother. According to her ideas, our sex have great duties to perform, and we are peculiarly gifted by God with beauties of person and mind, the better to enable us to do those duties; but if you are right, Mrs. Lighthouse, our sex is low indeed in the scale of creation; yes, lower than the beasts that walk the field, for they all do their just and equal shares as assigned them; but our half of humanity, according to your view, is only intended to prey on the other half. As a belief in this would be too humiliating to me, I will retain my mother's views for the present, Mrs. Lighthouse, without wishing to be disagreeable to you.”

“Oh, certainly, Miss Wagner; retain your mother's views, they are very pretty.” Here Mrs. Lighthouse gave a chuckling laugh. “You are young yet. You will soon find out for yourself, especially out there in California; so we will drop the subject.”

Minnie now made an excuse to go below, for the very sight of this woman had become intolerable to her. She opened her trunk, and, taking out a book, kissed it, saying:

“Dear little book, you shall be my companion for the rest of this trip. You are a thousand times better than that creature calling herself a woman and a lady.”

Minnie now read all the time, except during meals. When on deck she wore a wide sunshade, which, when her head was bent over her book, completely hid her face from view. She sat a little distance from Mrs. Lighthouse, and avoided conversation with her as much as she could without being rude or giving offense. Mrs. Lighthouse soon began to draw gentlemen around her, with whom she talked and laughed with the familiarity of old acquaintances. Minnie kept clear of all these persons for some time, until one day Mrs. Lighthouse walked directly over to where she was seated, and said, in an affected sort of a way:

“Miss Wagner, my dear, Mr. Wild requests the honor of an introduction to you.”

Minnie instantly arose, and, stepping a little aside, courtesied 449 in a polite, formal manner, pretending not to see Wild's hand, which he partly extended. This cold, formal politeness rather confused Mrs. Lighthouse's friend, but he tried to rally, and said:

“You seem very much interested in that book, Miss Wagner. Do you never give yourself any time to talk with your friends?”

“Really, sir, I have no friends or acquaintances on board the steamer, except my escort, Mrs. Lighthouse; and I am very much interested in this book, so my time passes as pleasantly as I could desire.”

She said all this in a cold, reserved way, and remained standing; evidently wishing to have it understood that she expected Mrs. Lighthouse and her friend to move on, and let her resume her reading. There was no mistaking her wishes, but Wild made another effort.

“I have been in California, Miss Wagner, and am returning there again.”

“Oh, you have?” she said, in the same cold way, still not offering to take her seat. Mrs. Lighthouse now grew impatient, and said:

“Let us walk on, Mr. Wild. Miss Wagner, I see, is impatient to get at her reading.”

As they passed on, Minnie resumed her reading, letting her sunshade hide her face more than ever. As she seemed to read, she said to herself:

“What impudence that woman has, after I told her not to introduce me to any of her friends, to bring that vulgar, overdressed fellow and introduce him to me. I fear I am going to have trouble. I see the ladies are all avoiding her already, and I think they avoid me, too, because I am under her charge. Yes; I am afraid I am going to have trouble.”

The very next day Wild posted himself near her when she sat down to read, and tried to enter into conversation with her; but she only answered in monosyllables. He knew she had no protector on board, for Mrs. Lighthead was worse than no protector, and encouraged him in his obtrusive impudence; so he moved up close to her, and said, in a familiar tone:

“Why are you so cruel, Miss Minnie? You are too handsome to be so cold to a person introduced to you by your escort.”

Minnie started; her blood ran quickly to her face and back again, and, without answering a word, she rose from her seat to 450 go, when Wild caught her dress, saying:

“No; don't run away. Listen to what I say.”

She faced straight round towards him; and, while her eyes flashed defiance, she said:

“Take your hand off instantly, or I will call the Captain to protect me.”

He let go, and shrank back like a detected thief; and Minnie quickly disappeared towards her stateroom, exclaiming, as she threw herself into a chair:

“What on earth will I do! I see several nice ladies here.

Shall I go to that nice, old lady they call Mrs. Egbert, and explain how I am situated, and ask her protection? But if I do that, will not this creature I am with be so outrageously mad that she may defame and denounce me; and how can I convince Mrs. Egbert, in such a way as to make her satisfied to take a decided stand for me; or shall I go to the Captain and ask his protection; but if I do, Mrs. Lighthead may throw out still worse insinuations, and I don't know what sort of a man the Captain is, though I suppose he is a good man? Oh, mother! Oh, Walter! if you could only be here for ten minutes to direct me!”

Here Minnie remained in thought for a moment, and now exclaimed:

“Yes; that will be the most dignified way, and the fairest to this woman I am with.”

Just then Mrs. Lighthouse entered the stateroom rather excited and flushed, so Minnie had now the opportunity she wanted, and before Mrs. Lighthouse had time to speak, she addressed her:

“I am glad, Mrs. Lighthouse, that you have come in. I want to say to you that that person you introduced to me as Mr. Wild has been most intrusively impudent to me ever since, and follows me from place to place, in attempts to get into conversation, when he knows it is disagreeable to me. Now, I appeal to you for protection against his advances, for if he persists, I will call on the Captain to protect me, if you cannot do it.”

“You are wrong in this whole business, Miss Wagner. Mr. Wild is a very rich man from California. I introduced him to you because I saw he was struck with your beauty, and I was in hopes that you would find him an eligible person to be acquainted with, you know; and I must say I think you have treated me badly and him most shabbily.”

451

“Now, Mrs. Lighthouse, I was placed under your charge. I would be very sorry to treat you badly, and will not do so; but did I not request that you would not introduce me to any one—rich or poor, man or woman? I am resolved to be alone on this trip, you know, so we may as well understand each other at once. So please tell that person not to intrude on me any more.”

“Well, you are a silly girl, but I see you are as obstinate as silly; so have your own way, and I will have mine. My husband is rich, and I am going to enjoy myself. I don't care who turns up the whites of their eyes at it.”

Saying the last part of the sentence in a defiant tone, she strutted out of the stateroom.

After this, Minnie was left to herself for some time; but Mrs. Lighthouse became more light every day in her deportment, and flirted and romped outrageously with the gentlemen who collected around her. She often staid with her company on deck late at night, and completely separated

herself from Minnie. Sometimes boisterous men would follow her to the door of her stateroom, and make it most disagreeable to Minnie. However, she managed pretty well until she got on the Pacific side, when Mrs. Lighthouse's conduct became almost openly shameful, and often insulting to Minnie. Wild became again troublesome, and took the liberty of introducing two or three of his companions, who were as intrusive and impudent as himself. Minnie was now in the greatest terror, and could not imagine how to act. While in this state of mind, one Sunday, she sat all alone in a retired little nook on deck. Her prayer-book was open in her hands, but was pressed against her forehead so as to cover her eyes, from which streaming tears flowed fast. It was the first time she had yielded in this way since she left home, and now they were tears that came with the earnestness of her supplication to God for guidance and help. Some one came near here. She looked up, and there stood one of the two sisters she had often noticed standing or sitting together, and who were treated by every one—sailors and all—with good humor, but with the utmost respect. They were two Irish working girls, making their way to the land of high wages. The one now looking down on Minnie said, in a gentle, low voice:

“You are in trouble, Miss. Can I, or my sister, do anything for you?”

“Oh, thank you,” said Minnie; “I fear not; but, then, you 452 look so good and kind, and I suppose you and your sister are Catholics like myself, and you are older than I am; so, if your sister will come over and sit here with us, I will tell you what my trouble is, for I have not one in this ship to speak to; and perhaps you could help me.”

So the other sister came, and they now introduced themselves as Jane and Maria Sullivan. Minnie told them her name, and that she was on her way to her brother in the mines, and how it came that she was put under Mrs. Lighthouse's charge, and the terrible way she was now in; that she feared to go to the Captain lest Mrs. Lighthouse would misrepresent her; and that, for the same reason, she did not go to any of the ladies for advice. “So, now, what had I better do, girls?” said Minnie. “Give me your advice; for, when I was praying for help, you came to me.”

“Indeed, Miss,” said Jane, “it is you that could give the likes of us advice, and as to the help we could give you, it is very little; but we will put our heads together, just as if you were one of us, and think of what it is best to do. We—that is, Maria and I—knew all the time that you were good, from the way we saw you keep away from that lady you have the room with; and then we saw you reading from a prayer-book, and Maria found it the other day where you had been sitting, and then we saw you were a Catholic, and our hearts warmed towards you like; and when we saw you crying to-day, all so lonesome by yourself, and you so handsome and young, Maria said: ‘What a pity! Go, Jane, and talk to her.’ So that is the way, Miss, we came to interfere with you.”

“Oh! it is no interference at all. I am most thankful to you; I feel better already.” And Minnie wiped away all traces of tears. “I know God did answer my prayers.”

“Well,” said Jane; “we know each other now. So let us think. What do you say, Maria?”

“Well,” said Maria; “if I were Miss Minnie here, I would never again enter the stateroom of that woman, for I overheard some talk between her and the two fellows with the white vests, who are always with her; and one of them said:

“‘I will trap her in the stateroom alone yet, and I will bring down her pride. I will run the risk of this brother of hers. My six-shooter is as good as his, and has shot a man across the table before now; and she is the handsomest creature I ever saw, and shall not escape me, I am determined.’”

453

Minnie trembled all over, and became as white as a cloth while listening to Maria. Then her eyes lit up with a steady, quiet, brave light, while she drew from her bosom a silver dirk-knife, about four inches long, with a two-edged blade, not more than half an inch wide in the widest place. It was of bright, sharp steel, and had an ivory handle, with a guard for the hand made of silver, so contrived and bent back that it was a support to the hand, as well as a protector. It was the well-remembered ladies' protection bowie-knife of “forty-nine.” The sisters started when she showed this little weapon, but Minnie quietly said:

“Look, girls; my uncle John gave me that when I was leaving home, and showed me how to use it; and bade me never use it, except to protect my life or honor; ‘and then,’ said he, ‘as a last resort use it, and God will give strength to your arm.’ And I feel that, in such a case, I would be no coward, and that God *would give strength to my arm.*”

As she spoke and was replacing the weapon, the girls both fixed their eyes upon her with delight and admiration that they could not conceal; and Jane, obeying a sudden impulse, reached over and kissed her cheek. All three now understood each other perfectly. No further explanations were necessary. The only question left was, what had they better do? Jane said:

“Well, Miss Minnie, how do you think we had better help you? We will do anything you say.”

Poor Minnie now became reassured, and as brave as could be, for, as she sat between these two poor Irish girls, she felt that she had protectors that insured her safety. After a minute's pause, she said:

“Tell me how you are situated in the second cabin.”

“Well, Miss, uncomfortable enough. We are to ourselves, of course; but we have to dress and undress behind a curtain, and every place for a woman in the second cabin is taken up. All honest women; but some of them are cross enough, and make trouble. I don't see in the world how you could find a place there, if that is what you are thinking of.”

“Yes, Jane; that is what I was thinking of; but, from what you say, that will not do, and we must think more.”

Just then Minnie saw the Captain standing some distance from where they sat in council, apparently watching them with earnest attention, and evident surprise, she supposed, at seeing her seated between the two Irish girls. In a moment Minnie's mind was made up; and, whispering to Jane, she said:

“Come with me to the Captain.”

Without hesitation, Jane obeyed. A word had never, up to this time, passed between Minnie and the Captain. Her uncommon beauty had often attracted his attention, but, being under the charge of such a frivolous woman as Mrs. Lighthouse, gave him the impression that she must be some runaway girl from a respectable family; so, while he admired her beauty, he pitied her also, as he supposed her lost; yet her great dignity of conduct and manner puzzled him when he thought at all about the matter. Now a new light seemed to strike him, as he saw her seated between the Irish girls, evidently taking refuge with them.

“Oh!” said he to himself: “By Heavens! she is all right, after all, or she never would have thrown herself into that Gibraltar. Yes; I understand her perfectly now; she has, in that one move, checkmated these rascals that were dogging her, rid herself of that worthless woman who had her in charge, established herself in the good opinion of every one, and secured a guard of honor, with which she could travel in safety all the world over; for, whatever they may say of the Irish, justly or unjustly, there is none to doubt the pre-eminent chastity of their women, high and low, taken as a class; and worthless men are seldom so foolish as to undertake the hopeless task of undermining it.”

As soon as the Captain saw Minnie and Jane approaching him, he advanced a few steps to meet them; and, raising his hat to Minnie, said, with marked respect:

“Miss Wagner, I believe,” and continued, as she bowed in assent: “I have not had the pleasure of an introduction, but that is unnecessary. So, please, young lady, say if I can be of any use to you.”

Minnie was so agitated that she could not at first get her voice when she tried to speak, and was trembling in every limb. Jane quickly passed her strong arm around her waist, fearing she was about to faint, and said:

“Give her a little time, Captain, please, and she will tell you.”

Please, Miss Wagner, take a seat, and do not allow yourself to be so agitated. We have plenty of time, and it is my duty to attend to the wants of my passengers. So, after you rest a little, tell me what you want, and I will, I think, be able to assist you.”

Minnie sat down by the Captain, and Jane remained standing; 455 but the Captain, pointing to a vacant seat, said: “Please sit, also.”

Minnie now, by an effort, recovered herself; and, looking up to the Captain with an expression of countenance the Captain afterwards declared to have been the sweetest he had ever seen in his life, said, in a voice yet trembling, but earnest and clear:

“Oh! Captain; I am so far from home, and so frightened, for I have no protection here; and I want to tell you everything; and I was so afraid, you see, that you might not know that I was telling you just the truth.”

“Be assured, Miss Wagner, that I shall not misunderstand you; so do not be at all alarmed. Speak to me as you would to a friend; for it is my duty to be a friend to each and every passenger on board this steamer.”

Now, Minnie, in her own gentle way, told the Captain, as she had told the girls, how she came to be with Mrs. Lighthouse, and the terrible life she was leading with her for the last ten days, and how she formed the acquaintance of the two girls; and that they had offered to protect her; and that, if it were possible, she wanted to get some room or safe place, where she could sleep and stay with them for the rest of the voyage; and that she was well provided with money, and would pay for this accommodation; and for which, besides, she and her brother would be ever so much obliged. She then told who her brother was and where he was in business, and taking from between the leaves of her prayer-book Walter's letter, just received before she left home, she handed it to the Captain, with a request that he would read it. The Captain assured her that the reading of the letter was unnecessary, but that he would do so to please her, at his earliest convenience, and then return

it. He further assured her of his full approval of the move she had made, and that she might rely on his protection.

He then went to see the Purser, and soon returned with the news that an arrangement could be made to give a state-room to Minnie and her two friends, with the right for the girls to take their meals in the cabin at the second table.

Minnie was now truly happy. That afternoon, under the orders of the Purser, her baggage was removed to its new location, and the two girls were installed with her. Minnie's story ran fast among her fellow-passengers; and soon she became the object of interest and praise.

456

"I knew all the time," said one lady, "that she was all right."

"Yes," said another; "I did, too, and pitied her."

"Well, then, mamma, why did you forbid me to go to talk to her the other day, if you knew she was all right, as you say," said a nice girl of sixteen to her discerning mother. "Or, why did not some of you go and offer to help her, as those Irish girls did?"

"You are not old enough to understand these things yet, my dear. It was necessary for Miss Wagner (I believe that is her name,) to place herself right before any of us ladies could go near her. That she has now done; and, of course, we are willing to take her by the hand."

"But she won't want you now, mamma; and I cannot, for the life of me, see why some of you who praise her now, and who saw all the time that she was good, did not do what those Irish girls did, when you saw her fairly driven out of her stateroom by the conduct of that woman."

"Oh! child, you don't, I tell you, understand these matters; so say no more about it."

Mrs. Lighthouse was furious at Minnie's leaving her, and went to the Captain in a rage. The Captain was seated quietly reading in his office when she appeared before him. He raised his head from his book, but never moved his position, as Mrs. Lighthouse commenced:

“Captain, did you sanction that young girl leaving my protection and going off with those Irish women?”

“I approved of the course Miss Wagner took, Mrs. Lighthouse. Did you wish anything else, madam?”

The Captain spoke in a slow, measured tone, without a muscle in his face moving, while his eyes were fixed on Mrs. Lighthouse's countenance.

“Captain, my husband is a rich man, and lives in San Francisco, and I will report this conduct of yours to him; for, of course, that conceited hussy of a girl leaving me for such company is an insult to me, sir; and I will report it to my husband, sir. You can depend on that!”

“The last man in the world, Mrs. Lighthouse, that you want this matter discussed before, is your husband,” the Captain said, in the same quiet tone, still holding the book open before him, while his eyes were bent on his visitor with a half-contemptuous look gleaming out of them. “But if you wish it, I will go with you to him, and I will take a *witness or two* with us.” And now his lips fairly curled with a contemptuous smile. Mrs. Lighthouse turned and flounced out of the office. From that hour Mrs. Lighthouse's whole conduct was changed. She appeared to cut her gentlemen acquaintances dead, and was propriety and circumspection itself in all her conduct for the rest of the voyage.

As the steamer neared San Francisco, Mrs. Lighthouse was seen to approach the Captain, and have some earnest words with him, appearing to use her handkerchief freely, as if to stop flowing tears. The interview seemed satisfactory to her, and, just as she was leaving, the Captain was heard to say:

“All right; you have nothing to fear from me, Mrs. Lighthouse.”

So let us hope that Minnie's heroic conduct not only got herself out of a great difficulty, but also saved from utter ruin the poor, weak creature under whose protection she had so unfortunately been placed.

Wild and his friends never again tormented Minnie; and the two Irish girls watched and cared for her as if she was something sacred. She sat between them on the deck, and amused them either by talking or reading to them. She would not go to the first table to take her meals, but waited for the second, and sat between them. A rather homely young lady, observing this, said:

“I do believe she does that to show off her beauty, for I confess she does look charming seated there between those great, strong women; and I see the gentlemen all making excuses to pass by her so as to have a look at her.”

“But how is it,” said another, “that now that all the ladies and gentlemen are trying to get acquainted with her, she avoids them as much as we avoided her before? This, surely, does not look like trying to show off her beauty.”

After a few days, Minnie was left entirely undisturbed with her two friends, until the steamer dropped anchor in the bay of San Francisco.

CHAPTER VII.

MINNIE'S PLAN TO MEET HER BROTHER.

It was ten in the morning when the steamer in which our little heroine came passenger reached the wharf in San Francisco. In the confusion and rush that ensued no one seemed to notice Minnie or her two faithful companions. Oh, with what intense anxiety did Minnie watch the face of every man that rushed on board; but two hours passed, and no Walter came for his pet and darling sister. A terrible fear took possession of her that some accident had befallen him.

“Oh, girls, what *will* I do? Here, a stranger and alone, and you are strangers, too. Oh, if anything should have happened Walter!

“Dear Miss Minnie, do not forget so that God is with you. Do as you did before; do what looks right for you to do, and He will take you through all safe, you know, Miss Minnie.”

“Yes, Jane, you are right, and this is no time to be a coward. What is the name of the boarding-house you were directed to by the friend who wrote to you from Stockton to come to California?”

Jane then took a letter out of her pocket, and read from it the following:

“When you get to San Francisco go to a boarding-house kept by one Nicholas Donnelly and his wife, in Jackson street, a little below Montgomery street. She and her husband are good people, and will soon get you a place, and if they do not, write to me, and I can get you lots of places up here. If any one asks you to marry them, don't do it until you know who you are marrying, for there are some great rascals in California, as well as lots of good men. I am going to be married to a nice farmer myself next week.”

Jane laughed as she read this last part of the quotation, and said:

“She need not have said that about getting married, for I am 459 sure we don't think of such a thing, for all we want, just yet a bit, is to make money to send home to bring out two brothers we have in Ireland.”

“Well, girls,” said Minnie, “let us all three go to this boarding-house, and I will leave a note here with the Captain to give to my brother, if he comes, to say where he can find me, and, perhaps, he will come some time to-day or to-morrow.”

And so it was arranged. Minnie found the boarding-house a rough place. Donnelly was a rough specimen of good nature. He had a good, kind heart, and was zealous and active in getting good places for girls who put up at his house. The wife was very like her husband in every respect; a

bustling, active, honest Irish woman. When Mrs. Donnelly's eyes rested on Minnie, she stopped short, and a look of surprise appeared for a moment on her face, and then, turning towards Jane, she said:

“Your friend, I suppose?”

“Yes,” said Jane, promptly. “This is Miss Wagner, waiting for her brother; she came with us.”

“Oh, that is all right.” And, turning to Minnie, she continued: “I am afraid, Miss Wagner, you will find this house a rough place for you; but you will be safe, anyway, until your brother comes for you, and you know people like us cannot keep a fine house here in California, where everything costs so.”

“The house is good enough, Mrs. Donnelly, for me, or any one; and I am perfectly content to be in a safe place, as you say, with my friends, until my brother comes.”

There was something about Minnie's voice and manner that attracted every one; so, as Mrs. Donnelly hastened away to get her guests something to eat, she said to herself:

“She is a sweet darling of a girl, surely. What a pity if the poor thing gets a bad husband out here!”

After dinner, Minnie wrote to Mr. Allen, telling him of her arrival, and asking him if he knew anything of her brother's movements. Mrs. Donnelly's little son took the note, and soon returned with this endorsement written on the open note:

Mr. Allen and Mr. Wheeler both being absent, I opened this note, and wish to say that we have heard nothing from Mr. Walter Wagner lately, although I find a letter from him to our firm on file, in which he says that he expected soon to be in the city. E. F. BAKER, Bookkeeper.

Minnie had no acquaintance whatever with any one of the firm of Allen, Wheeler & Co., but Mr. Allen himself; so, of course, this ended all further communication with them. She now became very anxious. The fact that Walter had written to Allen, Wheeler & Co. that he was soon to come

to the city looked as if he must have received her letter; and yet what could have prevented his coming? Mrs. Donnelly had just been giving her details of robberies and murders that were then becoming terribly frequent; “attributed,” Mrs. Donnelly said, “mostly to Sydney convicts.”

This further excited poor Minnie's imagination, until now she was in a perfect fever of anxiety. To add to her troubles, both Jane and Maria were that day engaged by ladies, who had called at the boarding-house, on hearing of the steamer's arrival, and the girls were to take their places the next day. Minnie made inquiries as to the possibility of her proceeding to Downieville without an escort, for now she was willing to run any risk that was not actually improper to get out of her present position and find Walter safe. Mrs. Donnelly said:

“No, Miss; I think not. There is such a crowd of men on board the steamer every night—a perfect jam—and very few women. If you were once as far as Sacramento, I think you could get on from there, for men in California take a pride in protecting women who take care of themselves; but they couldn't understand a girl like you being alone on the steamer. But from Sacramento up you would be almost sure to fall in with some family going to Downieville.”

“Would not the Captain protect-me-on the steamer?” asked Minnie.

“It would not do, Miss, to depend on it. The Captain is rushed to death with all the duties he has to perform, and he would tell you that you had no right to go alone on the steamer.”

That night Minnie hardly slept two hours, and when she did sleep, she saw in her dreams Walter lying on a bed of sickness, calling to her to come to him, and at other times she saw a Sydney ruffian murdering him. She arose, tired and half-sick with anxiety. The girls were to leave her in the afternoon. What was she to do? As she walked up and down the little sitting-room, she stopped suddenly, and exclaimed:

“Yes; I will do it, if Mrs. Donnelly and the girls do not say it is wrong.”

Calling to Jane and Maria, who were dividing their clothes and getting ready for their places, she said:

461

“Girls, I have just thought of a plan to get as far as Sacramento, if you and Mrs. Donnelly do not think it out of the way.” They called Mrs. Donnelly, and Minnie told them her plan was to disguise herself as a boy, and in that way reach Sacramento unnoticed.

“I dislike it, of course,” she said; “but anything is better than remaining here while I believe my brother must be lying dangerously sick, or he would have been here. I am half-sick now from horrid thoughts about it.”

Both the girls, without speaking, looked towards Mrs. Donnelly, and Minnie turned towards her also. Mrs. Donnelly remained in thought a moment, then said:

“I do not like it, either. It is, in the first place, running a terrible risk; for, if you were discovered, nothing but a miracle could save you from worse than death; and then we all dislike doing such a thing, we hardly know why. But, at the same time, this is California, and we all run great risks in one way or another, and almost always come out right when our intention is good; and we all, too, do things we dislike in California, and when we intend no wrong it is no shame to us; so, taking your difficulty into thought—and I see you are almost crazy about your brother, and it may be that he does want you, sure enough—so I do not see why, if you can fix yourself up pretty well, your plan would not be best for you, if you only have the courage to carry it out without being found out.”

So, after some further conversation, all agreed to Minnie's dangerous plan. Mrs. Donnelly and Jane went to a clothing store near at hand and purchased a full suit of boy's clothes, including a slouched hat, a sort of a loose overcoat, and a light pair of boys' boots. The great difficulty to manage was Minnie's immense head of hair; but, after several experiments, they tied it close back, and, doubling it up once, let it fall so as to be concealed by the overcoat and wide-brimmed hat. They then

darkened her eyebrows and complexion with flour scorched brown. Thus rigged, all declared the disguise complete, and that by a little caution it would be impossible for her to be discovered. Mrs. Donnelly recollected that she knew a girl working at the Eagle Hotel in Sacramento, and, giving her name to Minnie, advised her to put up at that hotel, and to mention her name to the girl, and she would find her a friend. Mrs. Donnelly's son had procured a ticket for the steamer Senator, going 462 up the river that day, and he shipped Minnie's trunks addressed to "Miss Minnie Wagner, Eagle Hotel, Sacramento."

So when the hour came, everything being ready, Minnie took a most affectionate leave of her two faithful protectors and Mrs. Donnelly, who all blessed her and prayed for her safety; Mrs. Donnelly's son went with her as far as the wharf, and Minnie, with as bold a step as she could assume, walked on board the boat, and aft on the promenade deck, and seated herself, looking out over the stern of the boat. Not one had seemed to notice her in any way, and she felt perfectly secure in her disguise. The boat shoved off from the wharf, and, as the steamer plunged her way through the bays and straits into, to Minnie, the wondrous Sacramento river, she enjoyed all the new scenery with intense delight. She had dreamed over and over of it all, and yet the reality did not disappoint her. The evening air was bracing and invigorating, and her strength and courage arose as though stimulated by champagne; even her heretofore anxiety about Walter seemed partly to vanish. The noise and bustle of the immense throng of passengers, almost all of whom were rough-looking miners, were somehow pleasing and exciting to her; and she exclaimed:

"So this is California, in reality, that I am now fairly in, I may say. Well, I like it already. It is glorious. Oh! how happy I shall be when I am away up there in the mountains with Walter. Yes; in my dreams of it all, I never felt so charmed as this. Oh! dash on, dear Senator, and let me be entirely happy. Yes; I want to get to my dear brother Walter, away up on some high place, such as he has often written to me of, where I can look down on this dear California, so as to admire and love it altogether. Oh! I am so glad I thought of this plan to get on, for no one can ever suspect who is here in these clothes."

Poor Minnie! Little did she dream while thus giving away to the natural excited feelings of her young heart, that the night just now closing in and enveloping everything in darkness was to be to her a night of horror never to be forgotten.

CHAPTER VIII.

RICH GOLD DIGGINGS—JOHN WARD.

It was some two months after Walter dispatched his letter to Minnie, giving her such a glorious description of his location, which he made as poetic and attractive as possible, because he knew her tastes well, and he wished that, when thinking of him, her thoughts should be all pleasant. He had also in that letter expressed the greatest wish that she and his darling mother should be with them. This he had done without any expectation that it was possible for the wish to be realized just yet, but to intimate that he looked forward, with hope, to the day when it could be realized. It was, as I have said, about two months after he had dispatched this letter, that one day, on visiting Downieville, he observed a crowd collected near the postoffice, gathered around a tall miner, who was apparently showing them something. Walter approached, and found it was a man just returned from some newly-discovered diggings, and that he was showing the crowd about four ounces of placer gold. As the cup with the gold passed from hand to hand, there were various comments as to the sort of diggings it must have come from.

“Where that was got there are bushels more, I can tell you, boys,” said one.

“I am not so sure,” said another.

“Give me the diggings where the gold is fine, as in the Feather River, for instance. The fine-gold diggings are always more permanent, and therefore better in the long run.”

“You may be right in that,” said a third, “but I tell you many a man will be made rich in the diggings where that was found, or I am fooled mightily.”

“Well, gentlemen,” said the owner of the gold, “I had been prospecting for nearly a month when I hit on the claim out of which I took this gold. I will make four of you, and only four 464 of you, this proposition: I will go privately and show you my claim, so that each of you can locate a choice claim, if you bind yourselves to pay me five hundred dollars each, out of the first money you make over all expenses. Then all others can sail in for themselves.”

This proposition was applauded, and four men soon stepped out of the crowd to accept the offer for choice claims. The miner looked at the men offering to take his proposition, and said:

“I am not acquainted with you, boys, but if Walter Wagner here will go your security, I will accept you.”

“Yes, Jake; I know them all, and it is all right. I will go their security,” said Walter.

“Well, boys, get some one to write down the understanding for you, and let Wagner put his name on it, and we will make our preparations to leave camp.”

Then a tall, fine-looking man, in a gray suit of clothes, who had been examining the gold with all the rest, and who evidently was a new-comer to the State, and not a miner, said, in a pleasing, friendly voice:

“If you wish, boys, I will do the writing for you, as I have nothing much to do.”

They went with him to Adams & Co.'s Express office, got pen, ink and paper, and in a few minutes the stranger had the agreement drawn, beautifully written and well worded. All were well pleased. The principals signed the agreement, and Walter was sent for to sign the guarantee. Walter appeared, and, as he read the agreement, he said:

“Why, this is done in good shape, and beautifully written. Who is your scribe?”

“I wrote it,” said the gentleman in gray clothes. “I am glad it pleases you.”

Walter, for the first time looked at the stranger, and was most favorably struck with his whole appearance.

“Excuse me,” said Walter, as he bowed to the stranger. “The reason I asked was that I did not know any of our boys who could have put this little agreement in such good shape, in so few words.”

Walter signed the paper, and Jake, addressing the stranger, said:

“Come, General, suppose you put your fist to the document as a witness.”

465

“With pleasure,” said the stranger, as he took the pen, and wrote in a bold hand: “John Ward.”

Jake now took out of his buckskin bag a curiously shaped specimen of gold, weighing perhaps an ounce, and reaching it to Ward said: “Here, General; take this. It is not much for your trouble, but it will do to show your friends at the Bay, as a specimen of our Downieville diggings.”

“Oh, as to taking anything for my trouble, I did not intend to do that; but I confess I would like that curious specimen, so I will take it, Jake, and always think of you while I am showing it.”

Ward said this in the familiar, pleasant way miners were in the habit of speaking to each other in the very first moment of their acquaintance.

Now one of Jake's new associates called out: “Come, General Ward, and Mr. Wagner, and all of you, into the saloon across the way, and have something to drink to close up this business in our miner's fashion. That's what brings luck, you know.”

So all laughed in good humor, and crossed the street to the saloon. Some called for “whisky straight;” others for ale; others for a punch, and so on in every sort of variety, until all had chosen their drink. Walter called for a cigar, and Ward followed his example. After some general conversation, in which Ward freely joined, he said: “But, boys, why the mischief do you call me General, for I am no General? I am a Captain, though, for I am master of the English bark Blue

Bell, now anchored in the bay of San Francisco, and, having nothing to do, I have just taken a run up here among you with my friend here, Frederick Brown, who is a sort of an old miner, just to see how you do things in the mines.”

At this, some one else called for drinks in honor of Captain John Ward, of the bark Blue Bell, and his friend, which were drunk with evident satisfaction. Ward and Walter happened to leave the saloon together, and, while walking back to the express office, smoking their cigars, entered into conversation. Ward had remarked that Walter was evidently one of the most prominent men of the district, and now exerted himself to the utmost to produce on his mind a favorable impression of himself. On reaching the express office, they sat down together and chatted for over an hour. Walter was perfectly charmed with his 466 new acquaintance, and, on leaving for home, gave Ward a pressing invitation to come to his camp in High Canyon, and make him a visit, saying they had plenty of blankets and enough to eat. Ward accepted the invitation, assuring Walter that he had no idea of finding so pleasing an acquaintance up here in the mountains. So they parted, apparently well pleased with each other, and Walter told him to bring his friend, Mr. Brown, with him, and then cautioned him as to the difficulties of the road to High Canyon. But the Captain, laughing, said:

“Oh! you know I am a sailor, and climbing is my profession.” In two days after this occurrence, Captain Ward and Mr. Brown made their appearance at Wagner & Hilton's store, in High Canyon. Walter received them both in the most cordial manner, unsaddled their horses, and unpacked a mule they had led with them, freighted with blankets and provisions; then staked the animals out on good feed near a little mountain stream, where the grass was yet green. Then, leading the way to the store, he introduced both his friends to his partner, and ordered the Chinaman cook to get up the best supper he could. They had some fine venison on hand; so, in a reasonable time, the Chinaman laid before them a very good supper for hungry men to do justice to, and Mr. Hilton declared that the Chinaman did better in this instance than he had ever known him to do before. After supper, each one threw himself into the easiest position possible to converse, or listen, as the case might be. Walter commenced by saying:

“Captain, why did you bring that pack animal? Did I not tell you that we had blankets and enough to eat, not only for ourselves, but also for friends who should favor us with a visit?”

“Oh! I understood all that, dear fellow, perfectly well; but this is the rig Brown purchased for us on leaving Sacramento, and he will have it with us wherever we go, whether we want it or not. I make it a rule not to act Captain on shore. I get enough of that at sea, and am only too glad when I can throw all authority off of my shoulders on to some one else, so I let Brown have his own way; and he would have that cursed mule up the hill to-day for no earthly object that I could see but to bother the life out of us, for I had to go ahead and pull him with a rope around his neck, while Brown walked behind the brute, prodding him with a pointed stick.”

Walter laughed heartily, in which Brown and Hilton joined.

467

“The truth is,” said Brown, “I am the best commander on shore; for had I gone by the Captain's ideas since we started on this cruise, we would have been sometimes without supper, and oftener yet without blankets at night; though, of course, I did not fear anything of that sort in this case. But I thought it might be that, in leaving here, we would not go back through Downieville; and then I thought it would be safer to have our traps with us, for those Sydney ducks are getting very plenty in every locality in the State.”

“Yes,” said Walter; “and the authorities in San Francisco seem incapable of curbing them in the least. It is too bad that England does not keep her thieves at home, or out of the way at least; is it not, Captain? You will agree with me, I know, even if you are an Englishman.”

“My dear fellow, I agree with you most heartily; and would do so even if I were an Englishman, which, thank God, I am not; for I am Irish by birth.”

“Irish! Oh! are you Irish? I never would have supposed so. Why, I am half Irish myself, for my mother was born in Ireland.”

“Oh! upon my honor! is it possible? Give me your hand, dear fellow. I thought I cottoned to you, Wagner, in some unaccountable way,” said the Captain, rising and shaking Walter warmly by the hand. Then he added: “But your father. That name Wagner is not exactly an English-American name.”

“No; my father said it was Pennsylvania-Dutch name; but I suppose it is not spelled exactly as it used to be. But, Captain, all this about nationalities I regard as a good deal of a humbug. There are good and bad men among all. Don't you say so?”

“Yes, my dear fellow. There is a good deal of truth in what you say; but somehow I am glad I am not an Englishman, anyway.”

“Oh, so am I; and so is a little sister I have, who is the greatest little woman in the United States, if she *is* but seventeen years old; and she is as proud as the mischief of her Irish blood. Oh, yes,” he continued, laughing heartily; “you say a word to her about the Irish and you have her all on fire, and the chances are that, to regain her favor, you will have to commit to memory ‘Davis' Battle of Fontenoy,’ and Emmet's last speech, and repeat them at some Fourth of July celebration.” 468 And Walter laughed out loud, exclaiming: “Oh, how absurd! I will tell you what is a fact. Because I said, just in fun one day—to annoy her, you know—that I thought it a good thing that Ireland had not got free of the English, for that I doubted their ability to govern themselves, before I could make my peace I had to commit to memory ‘Moore's Curse on Traitors' in his ‘Fire Worshipers,’ and top off with singing ‘I'm Sitting on the Stile, Mary.’”

All laughed, and the Captain said:

“There is nothing I like so much as to see a woman patriotic. How I should like to know your sister!”

“Patriotic!” repeated Walter. “Why, Minnie's patriotism does not stop with Ireland; she is just as fiery about her American origin. She could listen to father for hours at a time telling stories of the revolutionary days. Yes; and, to show you how far she goes with it, I will tell you a scrape James

De Forest, a friend of mine, got into on one occasion with her. He and I came suddenly on her one day while she was reading in a sunny little corner in our house, and found her shedding tears over the book. Of course we thought it was some love-sick novel, and I was surprised, for I knew Minnie did not go much on that sort of stuff. But, to our surprise, we found the book was 'Irving's Life of Washington,' and that the passage that brought her tears of sympathy was the one in which General Green is described, while on his southern campaign, as arriving at a tavern in Salisbury, in North Carolina, after a reverse the night before, travel-stained, fatigued, hungry, alone and penniless, as he himself declared in the hearing of the landlady, Elizabeth Steele; who immediately goes to her hiding place and draws out two bags of money, the savings of a lifetime, and the result of many and many a pleasure and joy resigned, and, handing them to the General, says: 'Take these; you will want them, and I can do without them.' De Forest was always fond of joking and annoying Minnie; so he began to ridicule Mrs. Steele, saying she was a fool to give up her money, and before he stopped he said something disrespectful of Washington himself. Well, what do you think? James was never able to make his peace with her afterwards until he committed to memory Washington's farewell address, and then they made up friends."

"Where is this James De Forest now?" said the Captain, while he laughed and seemed to enjoy all Walter had been saying.

469

"Oh! he is in Oregon. He is getting to be one of the first men there. Ever since he came to the State he has been going, as the saying is, 'slow but sure.' He is a first-rate fellow. I wish I had his tact for making money. I make it faster than he does, but somehow I lose it all again. I had a letter from him yesterday, and he talks of making a visit East, but says that if my family come to California, he will not go, because he has no near relations himself, and my family are all he cares much about."

"How many in your family, Wagner?"

"Only my mother and sister."

“Oh! I see,” said the Captain with a musing smile, which Walter did not observe, though Brown and Hilton gave a half laugh.

“Have you your sister's likeness, Wagner?” continued the Captain.

“Oh, yes; here it is.”

As Walter spoke, he arose, went to his drawer, and produced a colored daguerreotype of Minnie. The Captain and Brown arose, took it to the best light, and both declared that, if that was a good likeness, she was beautiful.

“Oh! as she is not here, and, as none of you gentlemen are likely ever to see her, I may as well just tell you that she is, in fact, much handsomer than that picture; because in the picture Minnie's face is in repose; but it is when aroused in conversation you see her real beauty; and I do think it is very uncommon.”

“Why don't you send for her, Wagner? This State is now filling up with women, and she and your mother would be such a comfort to you, I should think. I have only just my mother left of my family, but I am so sick without her, all the time thinking of her, that if I conclude to sell my ship and stay in California, I shall at once send for her to come and live with me.”

“Well, I have written to them, intimating that I want them to come; and the fact is, I should have had an answer to my letter by the last steamer; but I did not get a line. I know Minnie wrote, for she never forgets to do so since I left home; so I think her letter must have been lost; but I will, without doubt, have a letter by the next steamer, which will be due in a few days. Then I will know exactly what they think of my proposition.”

470

“Oh! I would induce them to come, by all means,” said the Captain. “It is too bad to leave a girl like your sister back there, and she must be so lonesome without you.”

Just then three or four young men came in, who were mining in the neighborhood, and were cordially received. They were introduced to the Captain and Brown, and asked to take seats, such as the others had, on boxes and barrels, and such like. The newcomers were evidently persons of education and intelligence. Now the conversation turned on mines and mining; and, as is ever the case at evening camp-fires in the mining regions, each had some strange story to tell of mysteriously lost prospectors. The first was of a prospector who had come into camp with beautiful specimens of gold, some as large as a pigeon's egg; and who, after supplying himself with provisions, had disappeared in some unaccountable way, and was never seen again. And how soon afterwards some of these very specimens were offered for sale at a store in Marysville by a hard-looking rough, supposed to be a Sydney convict. Then came a story of a prospector who came into camp fairly loaded down with gold, and almost starved; and how he told that he had found the diggings from which he brought this gold by following an Indian for seven days and nights into the most inaccessible part of the mountains; and stated that he could fill a quart cup with such gold as he exhibited, in these diggings, in half an hour. How excited the miners were on hearing this wonderful story. How they gathered around him, and besought him to take them to the new-found diggings. How he at length selected ten strong men to go back with him; how well they fitted out; only, however, taking two pack mules with them, which, the prospector said, they must abandon at a certain place, the trail being inaccessible, even to mules, the rest of the way. How the party left camp in the night time, when every one least expected them to go, and how they never were heard of again. Then how, in the next spring, when the snows melted, the skeletons of two mules and eleven men were found with an immense quantity of gold fastened to the bones of the dead men and animals; the narrator declaring that these diggings were never yet found. Several more such stories were told, to all of which the miners listened with a sort of mysterious pleasure; although most of them knew that they were in the main fabulous. The last story was one more extravagant, mysterious and wonderful than any yet told. At its conclusion, one of the young miners arose, saying:

“That will do, boys, for one night. Let us go. I have never sat at a camp-fire of a night in the mountains, since I have been mining, that I have not heard these same stories, or nearly the same, told, always a little differently, of course. The first time I heard that story of the gold fastened to the skeletons I had no sleep that night, thinking of the dead men with the sacks of gold fastened on them; but, after hearing the same story told in various ways to suit the taste and feeling of the chap telling it, I came to understand the matter; so the next camp-fire I sat by I told the gold dead bones story as having happened to myself. Not that I was one of the ten dead men, you know; that would be too thin, of course, but that I was one of the men who found the bones; and, by way of varying the story, I left out the sacks of gold altogether. Well, to my surprise, not one in the camp believed the story, and said I made it up for the occasion. I saw I had made a fatal mistake in the variation I had ventured upon; and now, when seated among strangers at camp, and it comes to my turn to ‘spin a yarn,’ I often tell that story, but am sure never to leave out the gold in sacks fastened to the bones. When I find the story is taking, and is sort of new to the crowd, I feel encouraged, and sometimes venture to vary it by saying that I found one skeleton a few yards behind the rest lying on its back across a large log with the head held down by an immense sack of gold-dust fastened around the neck, showing that the poor fellow, weak and almost starved, slipped on the log in crossing, and, falling backwards over it, was choked to death by his load of gold. And then I point to the moral, ‘Don't be avaricious.’”

This unmasking the stories just told created a hearty laugh.

“But,” said our young wag, “you must be careful, gentlemen, when any of you undertake to tell the gold bone story, with my patent edition; for I once nearly got caught myself in telling it. I had described the log on which I found the skeleton with the bag of gold on its neck, as an immense fallen tree, some four feet in diameter, forgetting that in the first part of the story I had described the whole country, in which we had found the remains, as being without a drop of water or stick of timber for forty miles around. Just as I concluded, some inquisitive fellow in the crowd called out: ‘Thought you said there was no timber in the neighborhood?’ I was a little stuck at first, but, recovering myself in time, I said: ‘Not one stick, 472 Captain, but this one log, and that was the

most wonderful circumstance of the whole story, and to this day we never could account for the log; for as to the rest, you know, it was most natural.”

“Oh, yes,” they all said; “the rest was an every day occurrence; but how that log got there was truly wonderful.”

Now the party broke up, all in good humor, and laughed at the outcome of the evening's “miner's stories.” Walter showed Captain Ward and Mr. Brown to their bed, which was a very comfortable one for a miner's camp. That night Walter had a strange, troubled dream. He thought he stood on “Long wharf,” at the foot of Commercial street, San Francisco, and that he saw Captain Ward's bark, the Blue Bell, looking just as the Captain had described her, sailing past the wharf, and that Minnie was on board, looking over the side, screaming and calling for help, while Captain Ward stood behind her apparently trying to draw her back. In an instant Walter leaped into the bay to swim to her, and found himself sprawling out of his berth on the floor.

“Oh, a dream!” he exclaimed as he rose to his feet, “and a strange, detestable one at that; but, thank God, it *was* a dream.”

Then, as he fixed himself back in his bunk, getting the clothes around him, he said to himself:

“My darling Minnie, I hope this dream does not betoken any coming danger to you, or that you are in any trouble. No, of course; and to think that, because of a dream, would be nonsense; but what on earth made me, even in a dream, connect Captain Ward, who is such a perfect gentleman, with Minnie in that horrid way? What strange things dreams are! How different the Captain looked while he was trying to drag Minnie back from the ship's side in a dream from what his natural look is, which is always so pleasing. In the dream he was just the same in every way he was last night, except that his eyes had a fearful, dark, cruel look in them. I am glad I awoke so soon, even if I did hurt myself by that confounded jump. Well, I will tell this to no one, for it might make a wrong impression on Ward as to my feelings towards him, which I would not like, because the fact is, I never before knew a man for so short a time that I have taken such a fancy to.”

And now Walter dropped off to sleep again, murmuring: "God bless you, my darling Minnie, and keep you safe."

473

The next morning after breakfast, Walter took his visitors through the diggings in High Canyon, and gave them an insight into all that was going on.

They pulled up at night at the store, and fared as well as before. Walter's partner, Isaac Hilton, treated both the visitors politely, but apparently did not fancy them as Walter did. There was something about them that all the time repelled him, as it were. He did not give himself much trouble about this, until he saw Walter so fascinated, and perceived from the actions of the visitors that they intended to stay for some time longer. Then his natural caution induced him to watch their every motion and look with great care and considerable uneasiness; which, however, he tried to hide from observation. On the third day, as Ward and Brown found themselves alone, Brown addressed his companion, with:

"What can be gained by staying here any longer? What do you expect to make out of either Wagner or Hilton?"

"Make! Well, I do not know that I will make anything, but it is too soon to decide. But, in a general way, I will tell you my plan. We have very little to do just now, so we are not losing time; and this young Wagner is a fellow of good parts, and he will always have a good deal of influence in any community in which he lives. I see he takes to me with a rush. I have made up my mind I will cultivate him; and after awhile I will get him to sell out to this suspicious dog of a partner of his, come down to San Francisco, where his influence among the Americans will help our boys very much without his ever knowing more of us than he knows to-day. I will then set you up in business with him. I will get him to send for that handsome sister of his. I will marry her. I will then have your store, you know, robbed, and the wind-pipe of this confiding young gentleman slit by some accident, you know. Then I will propose to my beautiful, young, sorrowing wife to take a trip to sea to soothe her grief, which she will do at once. I will sail out of the harbor of San Francisco with

forty or fifty able-bodied fellows of the right sort, and relieve two or three of the Panama steamers of their gold before the Yankees know their steamers are in danger. Then I will run south, find a beautiful island in the South Pacific, where I will regularly found my empire, making you my Secretary of State. There you have my whole plan. What do you think of it?"

474

"Think of it! Why, as a whole, it is a humbug. As to your getting this young fellow to sell out, and all that part of it, including the robbing him of his cash, that is all well enough; but what in the devil's name do you want of that girl?"

"Want of her, Brown?" said Ward, laughing, and then continuing, in an assumed love-sick tone: "My dear fellow, I am in love with her just from looking at that picture of hers, and from the description her enthusiastic brother gave us of her; and have her, I will; so there is no use in arguing with me. You will yet see her walking the quarter-deck of the Blue Bell as queen of the ship; and then, when I have found my empire, I will want an empress, you know."

Brown seemed impatient, while Ward talked in this strain, and broke in with: "That sort of talk is well enough when one is in the humor to listen to nonsense, but we have business to attend to now. I see our boys in San Francisco cannot hold up as you told them to do. The papers received here last night report two or three more smart little jobs. They will get into trouble yet, before we are ready to go to sea, if you do not control them."

"Well, perhaps you had better go down to the bay and give them to understand that I am not to be trifled with in this matter; while I stay here and carry out my plan in regard to Wagner."

"Well, I will go, then; but now let me warn you and give you my opinion. This young fellow, Wagner, is apparently mild and gentle, though a powerful man physically. It is easy to see that he loves this sister of his a thousand times better than he loves his life, and I pity the man that ever even looks disrespectfully at her; for, once aroused, such men are tigers not easily overcome. What you say of inducing Wagner to come to San Francisco is all right enough, because we can handle him, I see, so as to make a good turn out of him; but take my advice and let the sister

alone. Don't bring her near us, or the first time she looks into your eyes, her woman's quickness of perception will read you through and through. The brother will be put on his guard, and then the worst consequences may follow."

"Pshaw! Brown. Why was it that my mother did not read my father in the way you say?"

"Ah! Captain, but this Yankee girl is another sort of being altogether. She is young, and undoubtedly, from the description, as beautiful and innocent as you describe your mother to have been, but your mother was the child of luxury; she never once had to think for herself. Every one that approached her did so to administer to her wants or her pleasure. Your father was the first villain she ever met or spoke to, so it was just no game at all to deceive her; but not so this Wagner girl; for, from what her brother says, she is not only beautiful and accomplished, but she is a woman right out, and thinks she has something to do in the world besides being dressed like a doll to be looked at. You can see, too, by what he says that she is well read, and knows that there are worthless men and worthless women every day to be met with, and that a woman, to avoid them, must keep a sharp look-out. No, no; make no attempt on this Yankee girl, or you will go under as sure as the sun shines. No; be satisfied with Lizzie Lawson. You have won her; make her your queen, your empress, as old Jack, her father, I see, expects you to do; otherwise, he and his son may prove very troublesome."

"Troublesome!" said Ward, with an evident start. "Well, if they ever do attempt a game of that sort, I will close it up in short order for them. But, Brown, your talk is all stuff. Don't you know that I have told you that I swore to outdo my father in every act of his villainous life. He captured a bird out of a royal cage for his wife. Do you want me to be satisfied with one born of a convict bird? No; I followed up Lizzie in obedience to the wolf part of my animal appetite, but the lion must now be fed, and the more beautiful, intelligent, proud and keensighted the girl is, the better I will like it. Yes; you shall see me take this proud Yankee bird right from under the eagle's wing in spite of all opposition, even if the whole Yankee nation conspired to defeat me. Yes; I have set my heart on this feat, and I will succeed, or I am not what I supposed John Cameron Ward—Lusk—to be."

“Well, have your own way, Captain; I have shown you the danger; face it if you will, and, if you do succeed, you will sure enough have outdone your worthy father; but do not, in your tactics, forget that there is such a man as James De Forest somewhere about.”

“No; I acknowledge that he is dangerous, and, as a military movement, I believe I will dispatch some worthy of our gang to 476 Oregon to send him to Heaven, that he may not trouble me on earth.”

That evening the mail arrived from San Francisco, announcing the steamer having arrived. But to Walter's astonishment and alarm it brought him no letter from home. However, his partner reminded him that their Eastern mail was often behind-hand three and, sometimes, four days. This, Walter now recollected, was, in fact, often the case; so he made up his mind to wait patiently a day or two longer. This evening a letter came to Captain Ward, and, on receiving it, he and Brown walked off together. As he opened it:

“Why,” said he, “this is from Wild.”

“From Wild!” ejaculated Brown. “Is it possible! Then the precious rascal is back.”

“I wonder if he has made much,” Ward exclaimed, reading over the contents of the letter for a few minutes without speaking; then, as he read the last paragraph, he said:

“Here, I will answer your question by reading what he says in the latter part of his letter.”

“I made well on the steamer going east, but when I got fairly among the Yankee sharps, I lost nearly every d—d dollar, and had to borrow. I struck one ‘sucker,’ however, and did not leave him a ‘red.’ This enabled me to start back in a respectable sort of a way. I made nothing worth naming on the passage back here, except that I nipped about a thousand dollars' worth of jewelry and five hundred in cash from a California grass widow coming out to her husband. I knew that sort of stock, and went for her; playing soft with her, I soon got my chance, and improved it as I tell you. She had the handsomest girl I ever laid my eyes on in her charge. I played for her, too, and made sure I had

her, but she euchred me shamefully. I will tell you all about it when I see you, and you will laugh at the dodge by which she checkmated me. On the whole, I am not sorry that I made this trip. I have learned a good deal among the Yankees. I would not now be afraid to tackle Jim Becket himself in any game he wishes to start. The steamer reached San Francisco yesterday, and I am going to Sacramento this evening on the Senator.”

“Well,” said Ward; “this is an additional reason why you should be off. See Wild on reaching Sacramento. You will undoubtedly find him in tow of Black Dave. Tell him of our 477 plans, and of the necessity of keeping out of mischief just now.”

Early the next morning Brown left High Canyon, shaking hands warmly with Walter, and politely with Hilton. Ward, taking a good opportunity, that day, while Walter and he were seated on a rock some distance from the store, fell into the most extravagant praises of Brown; saying that he was from Canada, and of one of the first families in that country; that he had some money of his own, but not enough to start a good business. Ward then said that he intended to advance him whatever money he should want, and concluded by saying:

“I wish, my dear fellow, you could see your way to sell out here, and come down to the bay and go into partnership with Brown; you would just suit each other, and in one year in San Francisco you would make more than you can in five here. Then I could run my ship in connection with your house, and that would help you, as well as make a very nice business for me.”

Walter seemed dazzled at the proposition, and for a moment did not speak; so Ward ran on:

“Then you could send for your dear mother and sister, and we would form a little society among ourselves that would be perfectly delightful, you know.”

“Well,” said Walter, thoughtfully; “that does look as if it would be nice; and then you could run your ship in connection with those belonging to James De Forest's line; and that would be first rate, too.”

As Walter spoke the name of James De Forest, Ward gave a visible start, and for an instant there was a dark shadow in his eyes.

“What is the matter, Captain?” said Walter, looking anxiously.

“Oh, nothing, my dear fellow,” said the Captain, laughing, and looking down on the seat he had just risen from. “Something hurt me, and I feared a rattlesnake; but I see it was only a sharp corner of the rock.”

After this, they often talked of the San Francisco plan, and each time Ward found Walter more and more attracted by it. Early one morning, a day or two after Brown's departure, Mr. Hilton took an opportunity of talking to Walter. He expressed his surprise that Walter should be so carried away in his admiration of Ward.

478

“I will tell you, candidly, Walter, that I do not share your feelings toward this man; there is something I cannot fathom about him. I am satisfied he is not what he seems to be. I have observed him closely, and at times when he supposed himself unobserved, there was an unaccountably disagreeable expression in his features.”

“Oh, friend Hilton, you are always suspicious of all but those you have known for a life-time.”

“No, friend Walter; you do me injustice in saying that, and all I want in this case is to put you on your guard; there is no harm in being careful, you know, even if you are right and I wrong in our estimation of this Captain Ward.”

“Oh, well, that is all right; depend on it, I will be careful before taking his advice in anything, or trusting him too much.” And so the subject dropped. As they approached the store together, a boy rode up with a letter for Walter. It was indorsed: “The express agent at Downieville is requested to forward this letter without delay to High Canyon.”

When Walter read this indorsement, he turned to the boy, and said, sharply:

“When did this letter get to Downieville?”

“Last night, sir; but so late we could not send it.”

Walter, in evident alarm, tore it open, and read as follows:

DEAR WALTER:—Allow me to congratulate you on the arrival in your camp of your sister Minnie, who is no doubt now safe with you. I was sorry I was not at home the day her note announcing her arrival, and making inquiries for you, was brought to our store, but both Mr. Wheeler and myself were absent from the city, and the bookkeeper, who opened the note, knew nothing about you or your sister, and returned the note, only indorsing on the back that we were not at home, and that we knew nothing of your movements. On getting home to-day, the bookkeeper mentioned the circumstance to me, which surprised me very much; as you had not advised me that your sister was coming out to you. I went immediately to the boarding-house that I understood the note had come from. It is kept by a very respectable woman, by the name of Donnelly. This Mrs. Donnelly then told me of the circumstance which caused Miss Minnie to stop there; which, of course, she has told you all about, and how frightened she was that you were not in the city to meet her; and of how terribly puzzled she was as to what to do; for, as Mrs. Donnelly said: “This boarding-house was no place for a lady like her to stop in, and that she could not go to any other or to a hotel, because she was alone.” So, in the end, she had to adopt the desperate expedient of assuming a disguise in boy's clothes, and starting the next day, that is, yesterday, for Sacramento, on board the Senator. I am sure she is safe with you; yet I thought it better to write and give you all these particulars; for sickness, or accident, of course, is possible. The Panama steamer arrived here on the 26th; Miss Minnie left here on the 27th, and should be with you on the evening of the 29th, as, of course, she is; so, present her my warmest regards, and, believe me, yours, EDMUND F. ALLEN.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I met your old friend, DeForest, who has just arrived from Oregon. I told him that Miss Minnie had come from the East, and had gone up to you yesterday, without giving him any of the particulars. He tells me that he will go to see you to-morrow; so, you may expect him the day after you get this letter. A.

As Walter read the letter, he grew deadly pale, and trembled in every limb. As he finished he threw it to Hilton, and tried to speak, but his words choked on each other, and, without speaking, he ran to the store. He pulled down his saddle and bridle from where they hung; then he ran for his revolver, buckled it on, then thrust a bowie-knife in his belt. In all he seemed in confusion, and unable to control himself.

Hilton rapidly read the letter through, then said, in a calm, half-commanding voice:

“Now, Walter Wagner, be calm; be a man, and listen to me, and do just as I tell you and things may all be right yet.”

Walter stopped up still, and, looking into Hilton's face with a sort of an imploring expression, said, just above his breath, while his lips were bloodless and quivering:

“Hilton, she should have been here the night before last.”

“I know all that, but many things may have stopped her. She may have concluded to wait for you in Sacramento or Marysville; but I tell you to be a man, Walter. You believe in God; trust in Him. I tell you that we will find your sister safe if you only retain your presence of mind and act the man.”

Walter now regained his color, and became perfectly calm under Hilton's commanding words, and proceeded with good judgment in his preparations for an immediate start on the search for his darling sister. Captain Ward came in, and, on learning the strange news, offered to join the search. His offer was accepted. So, leaving a trusty young fellow of the name of Ferris in charge of the store, Walter, Hilton and Ward started down to Downieville, and there procured good, reliable horses. Now, all ready and armed at every point, they dashed up the terribly steep trail that led,

at that time, out of Downieville over the mountain. Ward had not seen nor heard read any of the particulars in the letter from Mr. Allen, and, therefore, knew nothing of the probability of meeting De Forest on their ride. He murmured to himself, as he urged his horse up the trail:

“Well, if some fellow has not yet got her, which I do not think likely, I will have a chance to capture her sooner than I expected. I will have the whole thing fixed up before that fellow De Forest knows she is in the country.”

On, on, Walter dashed. On reaching the summit, Hilton is by his side, but Ward is far behind, for riding on horse-back is no “quarter-deck” exercise for him.

CHAPTER IX.

DISCOVERY—WILD AND JIM BECKET—IN DANGER.

Now, my dear readers, let us return to poor Minnie, and stand by her in sympathy during the terrible night now before her. There she sits all to herself on the promenade deck of the Senator, leaning over the after guard-rail, looking down on the foaming track of the steamer as it ploughs its way up to Benicia. The supper bell rings, and Minnie cannot go to eat at the table; that would be too great a trial of her disguise, but she is provided for this, by the thoughtful, good Mrs. Donnelly, and now pulls out of her great over-coat pocket a nice little lunch, which she eats of with a relish, for, as yet, her mind is at rest, and free from all fear of discovery. While she is eating, the boat stops at Benicia, and now again shoves off into the stream, and dashes on its lonesome way up the dark river.

When the landing was made at Benicia, nearly all those seated in the after part of the boat near Minnie, attracted by curiosity, had left their places to take a look at the landing, or town, which at that time consisted of only three or four houses, or storehouses, close to the water. Minnie, alone, remained behind; but she was not long alone. Two men walked aft, and sat down very near her. They were talking earnestly, and in a low voice. But the moment Minnie's ear caught the sound of one of the voices, her heart quailed within her, her eyes grew dim, and, trembling in every limb like an aspen leaf, she sank her face between both her hands, resting on the guard-rail, and for a moment

was half unconscious, while a cold perspiration started from her forehead in large drops, and trickled down between her cold little fingers and bedewed her whole hands. Something within her, or near her, seemed now to whisper: "Courage, Minnie, courage; recollect Walter always said you were not only a woman grown, but a great little woman, too." Then she struggled within herself for composure, murmuring an earnest prayer to God for aid. Courage came with a consciousness that she was in no immediate danger, and, remaining perfectly still, she assumed a position of one in sleep. The two men near her had evidently sought that retired place to plot something they were mutually interested in. The conference concluded by one whose voice was strange to Minnie, saying:

"Now, Wild, if you do just as I tell you, Jim Becket will find that he has his match to-night, if he never had it before."

"All right, Mack, said Wild; "I will have my eyes on you and catch every sign you make me without attracting Jim's notice; so let us go, or he may get into a game with some other parties."

Oh! what a relief to Minnie when she found herself once more alone. Obeying the first impulse, she put her hand into her bosom and drew from it her little dagger, looked at it, and replaced it, saying:

"Yes; it is all right. God grant I may never have to use it."

The night had now grown very cold, and this place where Minnie sat had become almost frightful to her from the alarm she had just gone through; and, fearing the return of the confederates to council there again, she made up her mind to look for some place more sheltered from the cold, and more retired, if possible; so, she arose, and carefully adjusting her disguise, descended to the cabin, and cautiously looked all around for a sheltered spot to stow herself into. She soon spied a vacant seat, where she thought she would be safe from observation, and where she could lean her head forward on the rail that guarded the gangway, so as to keep her face out of view. Taking this seat, she was now as comfortable as she could be under the circumstances. But the night wore heavily to poor Minnie's frightened heart.

“Oh, it was a frightful risk to run,” she murmured, “to come here in this way. I feel now that it would be new life to me if I could get back in my own clothes, even here, and alone. Oh, yes; I see now that I made a terrible mistake, and that I would be as courageous as a lion, and that I could face the whole steamboat, full of villainous men, if I were only in my own proper garb. But, now, what can I say, or who will believe that I am innocent, if I should happen to be discovered? Oh, yes; I see it all, now; for, as my father often said: ‘There never was a crowd of men together, all so bad as to refuse protection to a 483 woman, when properly appealed to.’ But, can I apply for it properly, in this detestable disguise? But I intended no fault; and God will, I am sure, save me.”

That night the boat ran on a mud bar, either through a blunder of the pilot, or on account of uncommonly low water, and was detained nearly two hours in that position, which made this trip of the Senator a long and tedious one. As the hour of twelve was past, nearly every passenger, for very few took berths, was stretched on the floor or across a table, or lay on chairs; all fast asleep. Minnie feared to sleep, and fought it off for a long time; but at length it overpowered her, and now, once upon her, it became heavy and profound, for she was worn out with anxiety and alarm. The position she had to lie in became painful in sleep, and she naturally, without awakening, turned her head and placed it in a more comfortable position, resting sideways on her hands as they held the guard rail; but, in this move her wide-brimmed, slouched hat dropped to the floor at her feet, leaving her whole head exposed. The light from a suspended lamp near her shone bright on her beautiful features; so she rested, unconscious of her danger. In a little while afterward, two men came out from a state-room, where, it was evident, they were engaged in gambling, and advanced to the stairway descending to the lower deck. Oh, Minnie, one of them is the villain Wild, who, just as he is about to step on the stairway, stops short, and his eyes are now fixed on your sleeping face! He seizes his companion tightly by the arm, and draws him back, while he places his finger across his lips to denote silence, and whispers in excited exultation:

“Oh! it is her, the very girl I told you of, that so dodged me on the steamer. Oh, she cannot escape me now, for she is in man's clothes, and no one will be such a fool as to give her any help. If she makes any fuss, I will claim she is a runaway sister of mine. Oh, I am all right now; she cannot

escape me. I always had my doubts but that she was playing off; for, how could she be with that sort of a woman I found her with if she was all right?"

"Come," said his companion, "let us take a look at her." And now both men stood for a moment near her in silence; and, as they turned away, the stranger said:

"By the Lord Harry! she *is* handsome, sure enough; but I don't see, Wild, that you have any particular claim on her. I 484 have just as much myself; and, as she disliked you, by your own story, you had better just let me manage her."

"Not a d—d bit of it; I will never give her up. I will have her now, or die."

"You will, you say?"

"Yes; I do say so."

"Well, let us not quarrel over her, or neither of us will get her. I tell you what I will do; I will leave the dispute to Jim Becket to decide."

"Agreed," said Wild; and they both returned to the state-room.

Here they found Jim and another man smoking, waiting for the refreshments Wild had gone to order. The case was soon laid before Jim, with the whole story of Wild's former acquaintance with the girl on board the steamer, and how she escaped from him, and how it was he who discovered her here to-night.

Jim took the cigar out of his mouth, brushed the ashes off, and said:

"Go, Wild, and order the refreshments we sent you for; and while you are gone we will all take a look at this beauty, that appears to be lying around loose, waiting for an owner; and, as we refresh ourselves, I will decide the whole question, if you wish to leave it to me."

So Wild left to order the drinks, and the other three went to where Minnie slept on, all unconscious of her fearful situation. They each gazed earnestly into her face, and then turned away. As they entered the room again, Becket said:

“What a pity! She is beautiful, and little more than a child in years; and she looks as innocent as an infant in sleep. Yet, how could she come in those clothes if she was all right. Poor child! Some big villain has decoyed her from her home, and if the Devil does not get him, whoever he is, there is no use in having a Devil, that I see.”

The third man now put in a claim for the girl, which made Wild look furious.

“Well,” said Becket, after they had half emptied their glasses all around, “this matter is to be left to me to decide, is it?”

The other three men all assented.

“And you promise,” continued Becket, “to stand by my decision and enforce it?”

Wild looked dissatisfied, but, as all the rest agreed to it, he also gave in his consent.

485

“Well, then; I decide in this way: We all four want the girl—”

“All four?” exclaimed Wild, in surprise.

“Yes, Mr. Wild; I say we all four want this girl; and as each one of us has just the same right to her as any one of the other three, and no more, it is necessary the matter should be decided in some fair way; so I decide that we play another game at cards, and that the winner takes the girl, and that those who lose support the claim of the winner against all opposition.”

“Agreed, agreed,” exclaimed each one, and the glasses were emptied and laid away.

Then the cards were dealt, and all entered into the game with intense interest and suppressed excitement. The game is played, and Wild leaps to his feet in exultation, for he is the winner.

Becket felt sure that he himself would have won, and now looks with puzzled astonishment at Wild; for he is satisfied that in some way he won the game unfairly; but how he cannot imagine. Becket is the more puzzled, as this is the second time to-night Wild has baffled him at cards. The man Wild had addressed as Mack had a peculiar smile on his face, while he looked at Wild. Wild gave him a meaning look in return, and Mack said nothing. They all now arose, Wild saying:

“Well, gentlemen, I will go and attend to my girl; and I hope that, in accordance with our agreement, you will all stay near at hand to support my claim of being her brother; for, of course, you know she is my runaway sister.”

As they left the state-room, Mack took an opportunity to draw Wild aside, when the others were not observing them, and whispered in his ear:

“You don't take me for a d—d fool, do you?”

“No, of course not; but hold your tongue, and help me to get the girl to Sally Jones', in Sacramento, and I swear to you I will play a fair game with you to decide which of us shall have her.”

“That is talking sense,” said Mack, “and I agree to it; but be careful, for I see Jim is watching us both, and suspects us, and if he discovers our game, we had both better get out of California.”

“All right, I understand; and between you and me it must be ‘honor bright,’ or we will both go in.”

Just then Becket and his companion came up, and Jim said to Wild, as he drew his watch out:

486

“I see it only wants a few minutes of two o'clock, and the pilot says we will be at the wharf in Sacramento in one hour. The girl will soon awake—what is your plan?”

“Oh, well, this is my plan, gentlemen: When my sister, you know, awakes I will let her know that her brother has found her, and that she will have to come with me to my very respectable aunt's, Mrs. Sarah Jones, you know. She will, of course, make a fuss, and deny that I am her brother, and, perhaps, call me ugly names, you know, gentlemen, so that my friends, who have long known me like yourselves, gentlemen, will then come forward and corroborate my story. Then my sister will be rushed along in the crowd, with you three gentlemen here close up to us, and, with my arm gently around her delicate waist until I get her into a hack, and off we go to our aunt's, who will receive her lost niece with open arms, you know. Yes; my plan will work nicely if you, my friends, will only stand by me.”

“Pretty well planned,” said Jim, in a slow, measured voice, while a contemptuous smile was on his lips, and he continued: “I would hate to be able to plan the part of a villain as well as that.”

“No compliments now, Mr. Becket, if you please; you make me blush, and I have a delicate task just before me, which takes all my thoughts, you know. It is to reconcile my poor lost sister to return to the arms of her sorrowing aunt.”

Becket made no remark on this speech, but invited them all to go below and have a drink. Wild and Mack declined with thanks, just as Jim had expected them to do, so he and his friend descended to the bar. As soon as they were out of sight, Becket addressed his companion:

“Tom, it is too d—d bad to let these two Sydney villains take off that poor girl, whoever she is, and, perhaps, murder her in the end; yet, what can we do? Our word at play is up for it.”

“Yes, Jim, I just think as you do; but, as you say, what can we do? How can we break our word when once given, even to Sydney ducks.”

“Look here, Tom, since the first day I ever played a card, I never broke my word when given, as you say, in a game; but these two fellows have played us false in every game they played to-night, though I could not detect them.”

“Yes,” said Tom; “I know that well enough, and they are 487 now in cahoots in some way, you can see, about this girl.”

“Yes; of course they are. Well, I tell you what; Tom, let us go back and pretend to give in with good will in helping Wild to get the girl away, and after she awakes let you, on some pretence, manage to have me left alone with her, and I will soon judge if she is some poor child that has only left home for the first time, perhaps, and is not actually bad. Perhaps she is only making her way to some lover, who has promised to marry her as soon as she comes to where he lives. By the way she acted on the Panama steamer, by Wild's own account, it looks as if this may be the truth; anyway, if I get an opportunity, I will find out, and, if there is even a chance of her being innocent these Sydney thieves shall never have her while I have a shot left in my revolver; for my blood fairly boils at the idea of a poor American girl being in the power of those vile Sydney villains.”

“Well, all right, Jim; let us go back and watch our chances.” On returning on deck, they found Wild and Mack seated a little way off from Minnie, who yet slept, though now she began to be restless and uneasy, and once or twice changed her position. Becket and Tom assumed a gay, friendly demeanor, and Jim said:

“Now, Wild, you will have to be very gentle with your girl when she awakes; you must coax her, and assure her you will be her friend; and then let each of us go separately to her and advise her, and I think I can persuade her to trust herself to your protection. Find out if she has any particular place, you know, she wants to go to, and offer to take her there; and I will then go and tell her you are a first-rate, honorable fellow, and will not deceive her; and all that sort of thing.”

“I do believe, Jim,” said Wild, “that you could do more with her in that way, than any of us; for you have a sort of an honest look, Jim, if I do say it to your face; and she will believe you, I am sure.”

“Yes,” said Tom; “Jim can manage her better than any of us.”

“Well, now, if I help you, Wild, you know I will go around to Aunt Sally's in a day or two to see the girl, for she is the handsomest piece I have seen since I left Baltimore.”

“Oh, that is all right, Jim; I will be glad to see you, and you will find that I will not be selfish.”

488

“Well, Wild,” said Jim, “we will see what can be done for you when your beauty awakes.”

Just then Minnie sat up, and, with a half-frightened start, raised both her hands to her head; and, missing the hat, darted a look to her feet, where it lay. She snatched it up, and, while replacing it on her head, glanced all around to see if she was observed. As her eyes rested on the four men, talking, as if in consultation, she distinctly saw Wild's gaze full on her. A suppressed, deep moan, escaped her as she buried her face in her hands, resting on the guard-rail before her. Again, the terrible fear seized her, and shook her whole frame; again the cold drops from her forehead trickled through her fingers. “Oh, my God,” she murmured, “I believe you to be here in your Almighty power, to save and guard me, just the same as if I were in my own little bed in my mother's house; and I ask and beseech you to save me from harm. Oh, save me, my God, from dishonor and shame, and in all things else do with me as Thou wilt.” Then, pausing, with her thoughts all on God, she struggled with herself; and, concentrating all the powers of her will, she said, without the least mental reservation: “Thy will, Oh God, not mine, be done.” Then, something again seemed to whisper to her: “Courage, Minnie, courage; God is near you.” She heard a step approaching, and, looking up, Wild stood over her.

“Do not be frightened, Miss Minnie,” he said, assuming a careless, pleasant voice; “I am a friend of yours, only anxious to serve you.”

Minnie's natural, true woman's courage, ever the accompaniment of conscious innocence and purity, had now regained its place, and enabled her to face the danger upon her, with comparative composure.

“Sir, I want none of your assistance; nor will I accept any from you. You will therefore oblige me by leaving me at once.”

“Oh, I could not think of leaving you unprotected, while you are in that becoming rig, you know.”

“If you do not leave me, I will call the Captain, and ask his protection.”

At this Wild laughed. “Call the Captain?” he repeated. “If you do, Minnie, I will have to tell the Captain what you know is true; that you are my sister, running away from your virtuous home in disguise, you know.” And Wild again laughed. Minnie's cheek blanched, as she said:

“But he will not believe such a wicked story.”

489

“Not believe it? Oh, yes, Minnie; he will believe anything of a girl in men's clothes, you know; and then I have three gentlemen here,” pointing to where his confederates stood, “who know you and me for many years, and they will tell the Captain that you are my sister.”

“Oh, they cannot be such mean villains as to do that.”

“No, they are not villains; they are known to be highly respectable gentlemen, and they will tell the Captain that you are my runaway sister; and he will give me men to help me to take you home, you know.”

Minnie now seemed unable to control herself, and, rising from her seat, looked every way for a chance of escape. Her eyes were perfectly wild and almost fierce. She darted her hand into her bosom, and, while she seemed to catch something there, her gaze rested right on Wild's cowardly eyes. He comprehended the movement of the maddened girls, and quickly fell back four or five paces, saying:

“Miss Minnie, I meant you no harm. Forgive me.”

It was a derringer he feared, and he knew he dare not draw his own weapon on a woman, even if she was in men's clothes. His shrinking cowardice came in time to save Minnie. Her eyes softened, and she said to herself as she withdrew her hand, "No; this is not the time for that," and turning to Wild, she continued aloud:

"I tell you, sir, leave me instantly; leave me alone; that is all I ask of you."

Wild hesitated for a moment, then said:

"If you put yourself under my protection, I will see you safe to whatever house or hotel you wish to go to. If you refuse my protection, I tell you it will be worse for you, now that you are known to be a girl in disguise."

The reaction from the fit of fierce wildness that had just passed over Minnie came, and, feeling half-sick and weak, she sat back in her seat without answering, and again covered her face with her hands in almost despair.

Wild was puzzled how to proceed, and, withdrawing to his friends, he said:

"I tell you she will be hard to manage, and I see she has a weapon in her bosom, and as a last resort she will use it, too; but I will not give her up, and have come to the conclusion that the best way will be to wait until the crowd is leaving the boat; then let us all four crowd around her, and, as we reach the wharf, I will catch her in my arms and thrust my hand in her bosom, and get that weapon, whatever it is that she has there; then the rest will be easily managed in the rushing crowd."

"Well, that is a good plan," said Becket. "But yet, there is some risk about it, and, if you wish, I will try to talk her into going to the hotel under your protection; I believe I can do it. I will talk as though I had no interest in the matter, but as a friend, giving her advice."

Tom at once saw this to be “a first rate idea,” as he said, and, turning to Wild, said: “Come; while Jim is trying his hand in bringing this little charmer of yours' to a sense of her true interest, let us go and get a drink; I am awful dry.”

“Well, that is my hand, too, Tom,” said Wild, who was evidently excited and nervous, and anxious for a drink, to enable him to regain his composure.

Just as they were leaving for the lower deck, Wild caught Becket by the shoulder, and, drawing him close to him, whispered:

“Mind, Jim, she is armed, I know.”

“Don't fear, I will keep my eyes open,” was Becket's prompt answer.

While their drinks were being concocted to each one's taste Wild, yet half excited, said:

“I tell you, boys, I never saw such a look out of human eyes before as that girl gave me. Oh, I will pay her for it yet. I have looked into a gambler's eye when we both had our irons, ready cocked, leveled at each other's heads, without flinching a hair; yes, I have shot down my man under just such circumstances; but the look of that girl, I tell you, boys, just took the starch out of me, from my head to my toes; but I will yet bring her in my power, and that look will never be there again.”

Tom drank slowly, and amused his companions with long yarns, so as to detain them as long as possible.

Jim Becket was a thick-set, well-built man, a little under middle height; and my recollection of him is that he had fair hair, a high forehead above a pair of piercing, bright eyes, that looked always calm, but always searching, while you talked to him; as a whole, he was decidedly good-looking, and had a very friendly expression of countenance. As he now approached Minnie, she looked earnestly at him, but aroused herself, to be fully 491 prepared for anything, and gave no show of fear. Jim said, in a voice of marked respect, so as not to alarm her:

“Young lady, do not fear me. I come as a friend, and shall ask you a few questions, and, if you can answer them to my satisfaction, I will stand by you with my revolver in hand, if that should be necessary, to defend you from harm. That you may know why I come, I will tell you that this man Wild, who, it appears, you knew before, discovered you while you slept, and you being here alone in men's clothes made us all believe that you would not be very particular as to who might claim your company; so we played a game of cards for you, and Wild was the winner.”

While Becket spoke, Minnie's eyes were riveted on his face, trying to read his inmost thoughts, so as to guide her conduct towards him. Now, as he told her about the game played for her, she started and clasped both her hands before her, while her gaze was yet steadfast on his face, and exclaimed:

“Oh, sir, ask the questions; any questions; for you look honest and true, and I will answer all with truth, to which I will call God to witness.”

“Tell me, then, who you really and truly are; how did you come to put those clothes on, and where are you now, in fact and in truth, going?”

Minnie in a quick, decided voice, without changing her eyes from Becket's face, answered the questions clearly and to the point. As she finished, Becket said:

“Wagner—Walter Wagner—I do not recollect him. He was never in my rooms, that is clear; but that is not against him. Who did you say his partner was near Downieville?”

“Isaac Hilton,” said Minnie.

“Isaac Hilton; aye, yes, I know him; we traveled together once.”

Then, after a minute's pause, Becket resumed:

“Well, I can depend, then, that all you have told me is just the plain truth; for, to protect you, I have to do what I never did before, break my word given in a game; nor would I do it now for all the money in Burgoyne & Co.'s bank, but to protect an innocent girl from shame. I would be justified,

and will deal with this villain Wild without fear of consequences, if you are the girl you say you are.”

“Oh, sir; do not doubt me; every word I have spoken is true, 492 as true as that there is a God in Heaven above us. Or, if you do not believe me, and will not save me, then in pity take me and throw me into that river, for then my mother and brother would only hear that I was dead.”

Now her face grew calm, and her voice steady, as she continued:

“Dead they may hear that I am, but they shall never hear of my shame nor dishonor; for God will not permit that, I know.”

Becket, full of admiration and deep sympathy, could not at once command his voice to speak; and, from this silence, poor Minnie feared he yet hesitated to become her friend. A desperate feeling of almost despair again came on her, and, obeying a sudden impulse to make a last appeal for protection, she sprang to her feet, stepped close to Becket, and, placing a hand on each of his shoulders, while every lineament of her features lit up with an expression of intense entreaty, she exclaimed:

“Oh, sir, have you a mother or a sister? Oh, if you have, by all the love and care they ever bestowed on you, save me! Oh, save me from dishonor; for, if aught befell me, my mother's heart would break, and my poor brother would wither away and die! Save me, and I will be to you a sister while life lasts! Save an unprotected girl, and God will bless and make your last hour happy!”

In a voice trembling with excitement, Becket said:

“Be calm and fear not; I will take you at your word. I am now your second brother, and will save you or die in the attempt.”

Minnie's only answer was to grasp her protector's hand, raise it to her lips, and kiss it with wild emotion.

“Now,” said Becket, “we have not a moment to lose. We are approaching Sacramento. The moment the boat nears the wharf I will leap on shore to make arrangements for your escape. And now listen to every word I say, and do not lose a syllable of it. I will now go down and see Wild, and will tell him that you have agreed to go with him to the Eagle Hotel, if he acts right to you; he will then come and sit near you; tell him that you have agreed to take his protection, provided he acts the gentleman towards you, and makes no disagreeable advances. Then, when the boat touches, wait a little before you go on shore, but not too long, for I want a crowd on the wharf when you reach it. When the plank is adjusted, take his arm 493 and walk slowly with him to the wharf. The moment you put your foot on the wharf, look for a man with a white handkerchief tied on his hat, and, with a sudden spring, rush to him. He will throw his arm around your waist, and in a minute more you will be in a hack, driven off. Trust the driver as you would your brother; for he will be under my directions, and I will soon join you. Now, to sum it up over again. Your part is this: You are to play off this fellow Wild, so as to make him satisfied, and the moment you reach the wharf, with a bound, you are to be in the arms of the man with the white handkerchief on his hat. Do you understand all now perfectly, and do you trust me as a brother?”

“I understand all perfectly, and I trust you with my life and all, without a shadow of fear or doubt, and will obey you in everything, because you are now my brother.”

Minnie spoke in a clear, low whisper, and Becket was satisfied that it would not be her fault if his plan failed.

“Now, Minnie,” said Becket, “pray to God for help. He will hear you when my prayers would have no claim.”

Then Becket was on his way down the stairway to inform his friends of his success. They were all apparently highly pleased. Becket told Wild that he had pledged his word that he would be gentle and considerate in his conduct while conducting her to the Eagle Hotel. Wild laughed, and said:

“Oh, go to the Eagle Hotel; that is all right. Don't you fear, Jim; I will play my part well. Yes; I will be a perfect gentleman until dear Aunt Sally has the door locked behind us both. Then I will politely take that little derringer, or whatever that is she has in her bosom, away from her. Oh, yes; I will take that away just to be sure, you know, that Aunt Sally or myself won't require a surgeon, or may be the coroner, at unreasonable hours, you know.”

Here Wild laughed heartily, and continued:

“Thank you, Jim; thank you. Come, let us all have a drink. What will you all have, gentlemen? When will we expect you at Aunt Sally's, Jim?”

“Oh, I will not be unreasonable, Wild. You won the girl fairly; I will call in a week or so.”

“Well, well; as you say, I won the girl fairly, Jim; and you will be welcome whenever you do come; and by that time my little pet will receive you most charmingly; for she will see that 494 you knew better than herself where she wanted to go. But I must be off to play my part.” As he started upstairs, Mack followed him, saying:

“Introduce me, Wild.”

“Oh, yes; come.”

Becket looked after them, muttering low to Tom:

“A precious pair of rascals. If I owed the Devil a thousand scamps, he would give me a receipt in full for those two fellows.”

Then Jim told Tom all about his interview and its result, and his plan of escape, concluding with:

“Now, when they are leaving the boat you stay close to Mack, and when the girl jumps away, of course he will run to help Wild to recover her; and as he springs forward be ready to trip him up, as if by accident, and if in this way you can hold him back a little, I feel sure that all will go right.”

In ten minutes more, the Senator was trying to get into her place by the Sacramento wharf. Becket was a constant visitor to Sacramento, and knew exactly what he was about. On the first touch the boat gave the wharf, Jim had leaped upon it. At a little distance back stood three or four hacks in waiting. On one of them sat a large man, while another stood near its door. In a minute Jim had his hand on the shoulder of the man near the door, saying, as he peered into his face:

“Is this you, Jerry?”

“Yes, sir, Mr. Jim; it is myself, of course. You are in a hurry, I see, sir; jump in, jump in.” And he threw the door open.

“No, Jerry; I am not going myself; but listen and mind every word I tell you, for we have not a minute to lose.”

“All right, sir; go on, sir.”

Then Jim instructed him in a few but distinct words, saying at the end:

“Do you understand me now, Jerry?”

“Yes, sir; and sure I do; what would ail me that I would not?”

Give me the handkerchief. There, now, I am ready. And where am I to drive her to? for I know the boy is a girl from what you say, Mr. Jim; and sure it's I that always likes to take care of the girls.”

“None of your fooling, Jerry. Listen; I want to get some one who will just step up and knock the fellow down who will be running after the boy, you know.”

495

“Yes, sir; and sure it is Tim Finnigan, on the seat here by me, who is just the man we want for that. Do you only want one knocked down, sir? He could settle three just as well as one, while I am putting the boy, as you call her, in the hack.”

“Well, he may have to let into two of them, but that is the most.”

“Ah, well; that will be only fun for him. Come down, Tim, and get your instructions from my friend, James Becket, Esq., of San Francisco, that I know ever since the first part of '49. God bless us.”

Now Tim was instructed, and all ready. Becket then turned to Jerry, saying:

“Now, Jerry, when you get the boy in the hack, drive for the Marysville road as fast as the team can take you; but do not take the direct road from here, you know. Rush round among the streets in any way that you think will throw any one following you off of your track. When you get clear of the town, you will see a large vacant building with the window sashes out of the front windows, and wait there until I come to you, if I am not there before you. Now, I must stand out of the way, and leave you, Jerry, to manage all; and depend on good pay, both for yourself and Finnigan.”

“Well, if Tim has but one to knock down, he won't charge you much, Mr. Jim; but, for the matter of that, we know our pay is all right from the likes of you, Mr. Jim. It is handing you back some of it I expect to be, and not asking for more; so God bless you, and leave it all to us, for I understand everything now; and if she, the boy, I mean, only runs to me, as you say she will, and the girls always had a way of running for me, I will meet you where you say, or will kill my horses outright in trying to do so.”

Becket now took his place behind a pile of lumber, from where he could see all that transpired. Just as he got into position, the plank from the boat fell on the wharf. Becket saw Tim Finnigan standing in a pugilistic attitude about four paces in front of the hack, while Jerry, with the white handkerchief tied on his hat, walked carelessly towards the rushing crowd, as they came from the long plank that stretched to the Senator. Then there was a sudden fuss or rush on the plank, and now a boy dashed out like an arrow, and caught Jerry's coat collar. In an instant Jerry's powerful arm was around the boy's waist, whose slouched hat fell to the ground. Now, with a bound, Jerry bears his prize to the hack, and, pushing the boy in, slaps the door to. As he does so, his eyes catch the form of a

powerful man rushing at him with a revolver in hand. Without stopping a second on that account, he leaps for his seat, and now his ear catches the sound of a blow, a groan, and a heavy fall. As he clears his reins, and brings his whip down on his horses with a will, his ear again catches the sound of another blow, another groan, and another fall; and now Jerry is dashing like mad away through the streets of Sacramento, in utter contempt of all ordinances against fast driving.

CHAPTER X.

PURSUIT—THE VILLAINS FOILED—NEW FRIENDS.

As Jerry Brady urged his horses through the streets of Sacramento, in the dark night, with Minnie in his hack, he murmured to himself:

“Well, sure enough, Tim had two to stretch. That is all right; he will be well paid, I'll be bound; and if I am fined for this fast driving Jim 'll square that up, too; but, sure, the ordinance was not meant for the night time, anyway.”

After he had driven at this rate for half an hour, he dropped into a slower pace, and then stopped altogether. He leaned his head back and down towards the window of the hack, and said:

“You are all safe now, Miss; so I will drive a little slower. Them fellows can never tell which way I came. How do you feel, Miss? Are you all right, Miss?”

“Oh, thank you, I am all nicely, considering everything. Was there any one hurt in the scuffle, do you think, driver?”

“Oh, no one, Miss, but the fellows that came after you, and Tim Finnigan fixed them two. Tim is a particular friend of my own; indeed, we are the same as cousins, because the Finnigans and Bradys, you see, Miss, were formerly from the same townland in Ireland, God bless the spot; and, though my name is Brady, my grandmother on my mother's side was a Finnigan, you see, Miss.”

“Do you think those unfortunate men were killed, driver?” said Minnie, with a visible tremor in her voice.

‘Oh, no, Miss; the deuce a fear of that. The likes of them never get killed, Miss; they are left on earth, you see, Miss, by a merciful Providence, just to punish us for our sins, glory be to God! Perhaps, if it was not for that, we could never get to Heaven, Miss; for we would have our own comfortable way, you know, Miss, in everything, and, may be, get too prosperous like, and grow wicked as well as rich. No, no; these two fellows are 498 alive and kicking, with, may be, just a bit of a headache from the way Tim put his fist on their heads; that's all, Miss.’”

“Where are you to meet Mr. Becket, driver?”

“Oh, then, I was forgetting; it's a good bit yet, Miss, so I must hurry up.”

Then Jerry, while handing in to Minnie a white handkerchief, continued:

“Please, Miss, keep this for Mr. Becket, as I might lose it out here.”

Now Jerry cracked his whip and put his horses into a trot, while he murmured to himself:

“Oh, hasn't she music in her sweet voice! I was forgetting myself entirely listening to it. I could have just stayed there a week if she had not reminded me of what I was about. I wonder how the mischief she came in that rig, and in Jim Becket's hands; for, the Lord preserve us from harm, he is no saint, no more than some more of us. But I know she is all right, in some way; for her voice has the good, true sound like about it that you never hear with those other kind, poor creatures! God help them!”

In a few minutes more, Jerry exclaimed:

“Oh, there we have the old building sure enough, just as the broad daylight is upon us, and, by the same token, there are the windows all gone from it, and sure there is Jim himself leaning against the

fence. How the deuce did he get ahead of me so? But sure didn't I travel as good as six miles out of my way to get here the shortest way I could, according to orders?"

Yes; it was Becket who now called Jerry:

"Hello ! old boy; all right is it?"

"Of course 'tis all right, sir; I never undertake anything that had a bit of fight in it, but that it comes out all right, Mr. Becket."

"Well, you did your part first-rate, Jerry," said Becket, as he drew open the door of the hack and reached his hand to Minnie, while he continued: "How are you, Miss Minnie? You did your part first-rate, also."

Minnie seized his hand with cordiality, and said:

"Oh, I am nicely, thank you; and I am glad you think I did well, for I ventured to disobey instructions a little. I jumped away before we were half over the plank, as I knew the crowd would hold that man back there, better than if I waited to be on the wharf."

499

"Oh, it was capital; and you did your part too, just as agreed on, for Mack fell headlong as he leaped after Wild, and then Finnigan—"

Here Jim burst out laughing so that he had to stop for a minute.

"Oh, it was too good to see Finnigan lay them out, one after another; and see him step away as quietly as if there was nothing the matter with anybody. Oh, yes; and then to see Wild and Mack get up and wipe their faces, and ask each other who hit them, and where the hack had gone to."

There again Jim burst out laughing, in which Jerry, and even Minnie, could not help joining.

“Oh,” Jim continued, “I tell you it was better to look at than any play Tom McGuire ever put on the San Francisco boards. Well, let us lose no more time. We can laugh better when we are all through in safety. After you left I saw our friend Tom, for a moment, and told him to stick close to Wild and Mack, for they do not suspect him, and to mislead them all he could. I then ran to Big Phil's, and got him to send me here in a buggy by the shortest road he could take, so I have been here these last ten minutes. Now, Jerry, can your team stand it to go to Frosty Joe's? If they can, I can get a fresh team there to take us to Marysville.”

“Oh, yes; they can stand to go as far as that.”

So, Becket jumped in, and Jerry put his horses again in motion, at a reasonably good pace. As Jim took his seat in the hack, he said, half-laughing:

“Ah, I see, Miss Minnie, you lost that becoming hat; but it is of no consequence, for you cannot get cold with that immense head of hair, and at Frosty Joe's I will get you some sort of woman's clothes. I have ordered your trunks forwarded to Downieville by Adams & Co.'s Express.”

“Oh, thank you, Mr. Becket; that was so thoughtful of you.”

“Oh, you know I am your brother, now, Miss Minnie; so don't mind thanking me for every little thing I do.”

Minnie's eyes suffused with tears, and it was her only answer, but Becket understood her. A red, lurid light now shaded all the horizon to the East, and brought out to view the great Sacramento plains, through which they were traveling. Minnie leaned out the window of the carriage, and exclaimed:

“Oh, what immense plains! What a strange, red light the 500 rising sun throws over everything. Oh, how lonesome those plains look at this hour in the morning; and, perhaps, all day! Oh, that mountain in the distance is, I suppose, the Sierra Nevada, with its great, white snow cap. As I see it now, I can fancy it some frightful old giant, looking down with grim sternness on these great

plains; angry, perhaps, at the sight of each new intruder, coming to disturb its mighty stillness. Is all California like this, Mr. Becket?" she concluded, turning to him.

Before he could answer Minnie's question, Jerry leaned back, and in a hurried voice, said:

"Mr. Becket, sir! at the turn of the road here, I looked back, and if I am not mistaken, I see horsemen coming like mad, after us."

"Oh," said Jim, coolly, "it may be. Miss Minnie, does Wild know where your brother lives?"

"I never told him, but I am sure Mrs. Lighthouse did." And Minnie trembled, and looked a little pale.

"It may be nothing, Miss Minnie; but you must be calm; for all may depend on that." Minnie was herself in a minute. Becket thrust his head out of the window of the carriage, and, looking ahead, exclaimed:

"Yes; there is the dry arroyo; I recollect it, with the timber on it. Jerry, when you have just turned that timber, stop; but don't turn out of your tracks the least bit."

"Aye, aye, sir," said Jerry, as he whipped his horses to their fastest trot, and the moment he reached the spot indicated by Becket, he stopped right up. Becket jumped out, and, putting his arm around Minnie's waist, lifted her over the dusty part of the road to the side where there was only dried-up grass; then he took a dried willow branch, and with it rubbed out all traces of his own tracks.

"Now, Jerry, we will hide here, and you jog on slowly until those fellows pass, and when they are out of sight, come back for us. I cannot afford to run any risks in this business, and they might be the men we don't want to see just now."

"Aye, aye, sir; well thought of, faith; though if Jim Finnigan was here, I would just as leave have a little tussle as not."

Before Jerry got half through talking, he was jogging on, and Becket and Minnie were hid in the timber.

On the horsemen came, at full speed. Jerry heard them, but never pretended to notice them, until one of them called out:

501

“Stop, or you are a dead man!” And before he could rein up a powerful man wheeled his horse in front of his team and leveled his revolver at his body, while two others, armed in the same way, were by the carriage. Jerry remained perfectly cool, as he said to himself, “Oh, these are they, as sure as guns, for don't I see Finnigan's mark on that fellow in front of me.” Then aloud he said:

“Captain, would you be good enough, sir, to turn that iron of yours a little aside, for it might, just by accident, hurt me, if it went off just as you are holding it now.”

“Who have you got in the carriage?” was the reply Jerry got.

“The devil a one, Captain dear. You can look for yourself, sure; and if it is money you are looking for, this morning, you came, as they say in Ireland, ‘to the goat's house for wool,’ for the deuce a cent I have got, but just this dollar and a half.” And Jerry pulled out three half dollars, and continued: “Mike Kennedy, that owns this team, that keeps the stable, you know, on Third street, gave me this to get my dinner with, and may be a drink or so along the road, so as to pass the time, a sort of like, you know, Captain; but if you and your boys here are a sort of out, not finding any one this morning better than myself, Captain, why you are welcome to this.”

The Captain, as he called him, took no notice of his offer. So he continued:

“Oh, I give it freely, and you can take it with a safe conscience. The Lord be praised, for I can borrow from Frosty Joe a bit ahead here. He knows me and Mike Kennedy, so you're welcome to it, Captain, if it's any use to you.”

While Jerry had talked on in this way, the men at the side of the carriage had found, sure enough, that the carriage was empty, as Jerry had said, and looked terribly disappointed. Wild now broke out with:

“Shut up your d—d Irish tongue, and answer all questions truly that I put to you. Did you take us for highway robbers that you offer us that money?”

“Well, Captain, to answer that question in a polite sort of way, I will just say that you all three look as like the gentlemen you mentioned as two peas do to each other.”

“None of your confounded impertinence, I tell you, but just answer my questions. Did you have any passengers when you 502 left Sacramento; and if so, where did they get out?”

“Get out, did you say? How could any one get out without first getting in, Captain? Answer me that, if you please. I told you, Captain, when you first stopped me, just as if you were highwaymen, that the devil a one I had in the hack. If what you are after is to pry into men's business out here, I'll just make a clean breast of it. I am on my way to the Empire Ranch, beyond Marysville a bit, you know, to meet a great friend of Mike Kennedy's; one Captain Ward, and bring him home.”

“Captain John Ward!” exclaimed Wild, in surprise, while Mack, who was searching the carriage, gave a start and looked up. Jerry's using the name of Ward was merely an accident; but he now saw the necessity of sticking to it with a bold front, so he promptly said:

“Yes, of course, Captain John Ward; who else would it be?”

Just then Mack hauled out of the carriage a white handkerchief; and, as all eyes were turned on it, Jerry continued:

“And by the same token, that is Captain Ward's handkerchief. He forgot it when I took him and his friend to the Empire Ranch, some time ago, on his way to the upper mines; and I put it in the hack early this morning so as not to forget it. So please, sir, if it is not much use to you, just lay it back,

if you please; for I like to be particular about little things, you know; that is the only way a poor fellow the likes of me can make a decent living.”

Mack kept examining the handkerchief, as if looking for a mark or a name, and, not finding any, he was evidently put out, and exclaimed:

“Damn me! but I believe this fellow here is the very man that ran away with the girl last night, and that this is the handkerchief he had on his hat; for I know that the fellow who took her had something white on his hat, as I had my pistol aimed at it when that devil, whoever he was, hit me such a sledge-hammer blow.”

Jerry, who was now leaning back in his seat, as if half-asleep, seemed to make an effort to arouse himself to say:

“I ran away with a girl, is it you're saying? Faith! I hope it is true for you; for there is nothing I would like so much as to have a girl run away with me, or I with her; not a bit of difference, so that I was with the girl some way. I have asked every girl I saw since I have been in California to run away with me, 503 but they were all bespoke before me. So, the other day, I just wrote a letter to my old mother in Ireland, and told her to ship me one round the Horn, and get the Captain just to sign a bit of a bill of lading like, to deliver her as good as he got her, and that I would meet her on board the ship with the priest and all, and get her made my lawful wife before I took her from the Captain; do you understand?”

Whenever Jerry dashed off into one of these talks, he plainly saw one of the men taking a side look at him, in which there was a humorous, encouraging expression.

“Oh,” said he to himself, “that must be Jim's friend that he called Tom, when he was talking about him to the young lady. Yes; I see now, and if the worst comes to the worst, we will have three against two.”

As he finished about his wife prospects, Wild said, savagely:

“I told you before to shut up your d—d Irish tongue, or I will silence it for you with this revolver. I tell you now, don't speak except when you're asked a question.”

“Captain, that is not the way to speak to an American gentleman. I have got my full papers; so, just say, if you please, ‘Your d—d Irish-American tongue,’ and that will be addressing me like a gentleman.”

At this Tom laughed heartily, while Mack growled out:

“Don't notice the d—d fool. For my part, I think Becket and the girl are near here somewhere. Let us ride back to the timber, and see if there are any tracks leading into it.”

All three now turned to go, and Jerry thought he saw a sign from Tom to follow them, so he called out:

“Captain, may I go on; I have a long journey before me, you know?”

“Don't you stir, or I will follow you and blow the top of your head off!”

“Oh, then, as I can't well spare that just yet, I will stay with you.” And, turning his horse, he trotted after them back to the timber, singing as he went, “The Widow Malone,” at the top of his voice, taking care while he was singing to examine his revolver, saying to himself as he finished his song:

“It would be no sin at all to bury these two curs right here.”

Wild and Mack now examined the dust on the road with great care; but not a track leaving the place where the hack had passed was to be found. On pretence of taking a look under Jerry's 504 seat, Tom rode up to the hack, and both Jerry and he stooped their heads low down under the seat, as if to see if anything was concealed there. While in this position, Tom whispered him something, to which Jerry answered:

“I was thinking if we may not just as well bury these villains here. Surely the only thing that would ever miss them is the gallows.”

Tom answered: “No, no; that won't do.” And then, turning around to Wild, he said:

“I tell you we are losing time in fooling with this deuced Irishman.”

“Irish-American, if you please, sir! I told the Captain there that I had my full papers as an American gentleman.”

Wild and Mack now seemed to hesitate as to what it was best to do; so Tom coolly said:

“If you wish to take a run through the timber there, I will stay here and hold the horses, and take care of this Irish-American gentleman, and, if I hear any one fire on you, I will go to Sacramento and give the alarm.”

That was putting the business in a new point of view, altogether; but neither Wild nor Mack said a word, and seemed utterly at a loss how to act.

“Oh,” continued Tom, “you need not be in the least afraid, for I am certain no one is in the timber; so go right in if you wish to fool your time.”

“Well,” said Wild, “let us ride on; we can stop at Empire Ranch and be sure to overhaul them there, because there they will have to take horses to go over the trail to Downieville.”

Just as they were starting, Jerry called out: “Captain, you would'nt have a little flask along, with a little taste of something good in it? I am awful dry from all the talking you forced me to do, when I was trying to hold my tongue all the time, so I was.”

“Yes; let the deuced Irish-American have a pull at the flask,” said Tom. Mack reluctantly handed the flask to Tom, who passed it over to Jerry, who said:

“Thank you, Mister; that is the genteel way of calling my name.”

Jerry drank, and, as he handed back the flask, said: “Faith, I tried to act decent, gentlemen, with it; but it was so a kind of oily, that, by the hokey, it all slipped down, Mister.”

Tom burst out laughing, but Wild looked savage; and, 505 grasping the flask, flung it at Jerry's head; but, fortunately, he dodged it, and, before he was done laughing, his three companions were nearly out of sight.

Jerry now gave a long, shrill whistle, by putting one of his knuckles between his lips. Becket at once made his appearance, and then Minnie followed.

“Oh, they are gone,” said Jerry, bursting out into another fit of laughing, that shook him all over. Becket and Minnie looked at him in half-surprise.

“Oh,” said Jerry, “saving your presence, Miss, the devil a drop I left them in the flask. I was going to act a kind of decent, but your friend Tom winked at me, and I knew what that meant, so down I let it all slip. Oh, if you could have seen those other two fellows when they saw me turn up the bottom of the flask high in the air to let the last drop go down!”

And again Jerry laughed and laughed, saying:

“You bet they will not want to meet with another Irish-American gentleman!”

“Now, Jerry, if that has not made you drunk, just tell us what passed.”

“Drunk, Mr. Jim; not a bit of it; it made me feel good, that is all; for I was a kind of down-hearted before to think of those precious scamps putting us about so; but business is business; so here is what your friend Tom whispered to me when our two heads was down low under the seat of the hack; said he: ‘Tell Jim not to go to Marysville until to-morrow; then he will have plenty of good company to go with him over the trail to Downieville; and tell him I will leave these two scamps

at Marysville, and return to Sacramento by the boat to-night.' That is every word he told me to tell you."

Becket now remained in thought for a minute, then said:

"Yes; that is the best to do."

He then explained to Minnie that just ahead of them there was a road that turned off to the house of a Colonel William Eaton, who lived about two miles from the turn; and that this Colonel Eaton was a fine old Kentucky gentleman, with whom he was well acquainted; that he had a most sensible lady for a wife, and one daughter of about Minnie's own age. Becket continued:

"I served a brother of his once, when he was in great need of a friend, and the Colonel has often expressed to me his good feeling about it. I know he would be glad to have me take you there, and I know he will not doubt my honor and word in the matter."

"Oh," said Minnie, "it is so terribly mortifying to appear in any family in this way."

"I know, Miss Minnie, it is as you say; but we have to face it now somewhere, and I know of no family I would rather state the case to than that of Colonel Eaton."

"Well, you know best, of course; and I will do just what you think best."

"I will leave you in the carriage," said Jim, "until I have had an interview with the Colonel and his lady; and if there is the least hesitation, I will not urge the matter on them, but come right away."

So Minnie was satisfied, and Jerry put his horses on their fastest trot, and they were soon at Colonel Eaton's gate. Becket went in, and was received most warmly by both the Colonel and his wife. He sat right down, and gave a short history of Minnie's troubles on the passage from Panama, and how she was virtually abandoned by her escort in San Francisco, and how her unprotected position induced her to adopt the disguise, and what came of her doing so. The wife and daughter could not help shedding tears of sympathy, and even the old Colonel was much excited. So Mrs. Eaton, taking

a large shawl in her hand for Minnie to throw over her, went at once with Becket to the carriage. Without waiting for Becket to do so, she drew the door open herself, saying:

“Come, my poor child; I want no introduction. Mr. Becket has told me all about you. Come as you would to your own dear mother.”

This warm address, and Mrs. Eaton's kind, motherly voice, and the allusion to her own mother, at once overcame Minnie. Every hour since she left her home had been full of anxiety and constant watchin, and for the last fifteen hours every nerve had been strained to its highest pitch of endurance. She was even now waiting anxiously, almost with fear, to hear the result of her friend Becket's appeal for protection for her. Then, unexpectedly, the voice as of a mother's love, full of tender sweetness, filled her ears, and threw the flood-gates of her heart wide open, before she could command them. In a moment more, her arms are around Mrs. Eaton's neck, and she is sobbing in a fit of uncontrolled weeping.

507

“Oh, calm yourself, my dear child; calm yourself; come, come with me,” said Mrs. Eaton, as she threw the shawl over Minnie, and with her arm around her waist moved her gently on towards the house.

“Oh,” said Minnie, as she found herself safe in Mrs. Eaton's bedroom, with the mother and daughter standing near her, “I fear you think me nothing but a poor, weak child, but this is the first time I have acted this way since I left home. But, oh, Mrs. Eaton, you looked and talked so kindly, and so like my own dear mother, that I could not hold out!” And Minnie sobbed, and sobbed again. “And, oh, I have had such a terrible night; but, thank God, it is all over, now, and I am safe here with you, thank God! thank God!”

“Yes, dear; you are perfectly safe; so try and calm yourself.”

“Yes, I know I am safe, and the recollection of last night now hangs about me like that of a hideous dream.”

Now Miss Fannie came forward in the sweetest way, and, stooping, kissed Minnie, and said: "My dresses will fit you, I know, for we are just about the same height and size."

"Oh, thank you; what a tax I will be to you, but how delighted I will be to throw off this hideous disguise."

Then Miss Fannie said she was no tax at all, but that it gave her the greatest pleasure to supply her wants; so she laid a full suit of her clothes in readiness for Minnie, and now mother and daughter again kissed her and left her alone, saying they would return when she was dressed. As soon as the door was closed, Minnie dropped on her knees, and with her whole heart poured out her thanks to God for her deliverance from the horrors of that night. As she commenced to dress, she said: "Why, how nicely every article fits me, just as if it was made for me. Oh, it appears a month since I laid off my own clothes at Mrs. Donnelly's yesterday. What a terrible mistake I made; but I did not do it intentionally, and God has saved me; but, whatever I did, as I just said to Mrs. Eaton, there appeared to be danger in it; that is the way I came into the trouble."

Fannie's gentle voice at the door came to announce breakfast, and now, as the two girls appeared in the breakfast-room, arm in arm, every one present came forward to shake hands with Minnie and congratulate her. Oh, that was a proud morning for Jim Becket, and he often afterward declared that it was the happiest of his life. When honest Jerry came forward, Minnie, with glistening eyes, grasped his hand, saying:

508

"Jerry, oh, how can I thank you?"

"No thanks at all, Miss. Isn't it I that should be asking your pardon for the quick, unmannerly way I thrust you into the hack last night, without saying, "By your leave, Miss?" But, you know, Miss, Tim Finnigan might, by a chance, though, to do him justice, I must say he seldom does make a miss blow, and in that case time might be a little short, you see, Miss, to make polite speeches; so I left them off until we had a more convenient time, you see, Miss."

“Oh Jerry, you were very kind and gentle and good to me all the time, and I am proud this morning, Jerry, that I am half Irish myself.”

“And am I not proud, too? for that is just the same I am, ‘half-and-half,’ you see, Miss; for haven't I got my full papers making me an American citizen, as I told that Sydney thief last night? But he would call me out of my name; but, oh, didn't I pay him back, Miss, when I got hold of the flask?”

And now Jerry stood laughing at the recollection.

“How mad he looked when he saw me turning the bottom clear up. I had my eye on him all the time. Oh, you bet that fellow will never want another argument with an Irish-American gentleman like me. He swore so, Miss, that I was glad you did not hear him.”

Now all joined in merry laughing, and Minnie's glistening eyes were clear and bright again. Colonel Eaton particularly enjoyed Jerry's humor, and after breakfast made him rehearse for him, and all the farm-hands, the scene of the rescue and of the flask, until all were tired of laughing. Every one did ample justice to Mrs. Eaton's excellent breakfast, which was of the regular farm kind, of broiled chickens and ham and eggs.

After breakfast, Becket had a private talk with Colonel Eaton, in which it was agreed that Minnie should stay where she was until her brother himself should come for her, and that a special messenger should be dispatched forthwith for Walter. This Becket undertook to do as soon as he should get back to Sacramento.

Now he and Jerry took their leave, feeling sure of Minnie's safety under Colonel Eaton's hospitable roof. Becket got the messenger; but it turned out afterwards that he was a worthless scamp, and that, contrary to his agreement with Becket, he deferred going until the next morning, and that when he did reach Marysville, next evening, he drank and fooled another day away.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DRUNKEN MESSENGER—THE FORGED NOTE.

Let us now return to Walter, Hilton and Captain Ward, as they dash over the trail from Downieville towards Marysville. At the crossing of the Yuba River, they met a long pack train heavily packed with goods. Walter's eye caught the sight of two trunks packed on one mule. In an instant he recognized them. They were Minnie's, and directed to the care of Hilton & Wagner. The train master could give no information in respect to them. All he knew was that Adams & Co. had forwarded them. So, wasting no time, Walter and his companions dashed on to "Foster's Bar." Here they stopped to change horses, and to refresh themselves.

"Can you get us something to eat while our horses are being saddled, Tom?" said Hilton to a hotel-keeper, whom he knew well.

"Certainly, Mr. Hilton; there is a gentleman now at dinner, and I think there is enough of grub for you all. Anyway, there is plenty of ham on the table, and venison pie, and you know my old woman is some on venison pie."

"That she is. Well, give us some water to wash, Tom, and a bottle or two of porter, for we have a sea Captain here who will drink one himself."

"All right, Mr. Hilton; tell Mr. Wagner and the sea Captain to come right in."

So they all washed and drank a glass of porter, and walked into the dining-room. Walter was in such a state of excitement that he went through everything as if in a dream. But the instant his eyes rested on the person already at dinner, he rushed forward, exclaiming:

"Oh! James De Forest, it is you! Give us your hand, old fellow! How glad I am to see you! Have you any news of my sister, Minnie?"

“News! Any news of your sister Minnie! You astonish me. For God's sake, is she not with you? Have you not seen her?”

“Oh, no; we cannot find her, James; she is detained somewhere.”

“Great heavens, Walter! What can it mean?” Then, suddenly stopping and placing his hand to his forehead, as if trying to recall something to his mind, he said: “Stop; let me see what was that I heard at the Empire Ranch, as I was getting my horse.”

Now all gathered round him anxiously to hear what it was he had heard.

“Oh, yes; I recollect, but it cannot have any reference to Miss Minnie. The stable man was talking to two gambling looking fellows; and one of them asked if he had seen a young girl—a very handsome girl, he said—on her way to Downieville within the last two days; and the stable man replied that none such had passed, except they had done so in the night; and that it was not likely that any one could pass in the night without his knowledge. Then the gambler asked if he had observed a boy with a sort of brown overcoat coming there with some persons in a carriage, or in the stage, or in a buggy. ‘No,’ the stable man said; ‘none such had come there.’ Then he demanded of the gamblers what they were after, before he would answer any more questions. To this, one of the fellows replied: ‘Oh, I am trying to find my sister, who ran away from her home yesterday.’”

“Did you hear either of the names of those gamblers?” said Ward.

“Yes; I recollect one called the other Wild, in speaking to him.”

“Ah,” said Ward, “I thought as much.” Now all turned to Ward, asking him if he knew anything of this man.

“Nothing particular, though I remember to have heard of a man of that name, and, if he is the man I am thinking of, he is, sure enough, a rough-looking fellow, as our friend here says, and should

be followed up at once, and made to explain about his looking for his sister; for this Wild I have reference to never had a sister.”

“Well,” said Hilton, “this seems all unaccountable, and we had better dispatch our meal and be off.”

Walter said: “Oh, excuse me; I have not introduced my friend, De Forest; my mind is so preoccupied. James DeForest, 511 this is my partner, Mr. Hilton, of whom I have often written you; and this is my particular friend, Captain Ward.” Hilton grasped De Forest's hand, and greeted him warmly, and a bright, genial look passed between them, such as always passes on the introduction of two persons favorably known to each other by report. As De Forest took Ward's hand, their eyes met, and for an instant the look was intense on both sides, and then Ward's eyes sank away. De Forest turned back to Walter, and an indescribable, disagreeable sensation passed through him. The meal was dispatched almost in silence, and they were all soon again dashing along the road on their fresh horses, toward the Empire Ranch. It was late at night when they got there. They saw the stable man that De Forest had told them about, but he could give them no further information with regard to Wild and his companion; but said he believed they were yet in the neighborhood somewhere, though he could not say where. This determined our party to lay over until daylight. Early in the morning, they began to make inquiries, and soon found that the stable man was right as to the fact of Wild and his friend being in the neighborhood late the night before; but, on going to a feed yard, where they understood they put up their horses, they found they had risen early and had left for Marysville, in company with another man.

“Well,” said Hilton, “if we ride fast we will overhaul them at Marysville, for they will stop there, undoubtedly, for breakfast.”

So on to Marysville they spurred their horses in silence. Ward muttered to himself:

“I must not let myself drop behind, for I must be on hand to save Wild if I can. The fellow may be useful to me yet, and in the scuffle that we are sure to have, I might get a chance to let a stray shot slip, so as to rid myself of this fellow De Forest. He looked at me that time as if he knew me. Can it be that some of our fellows have peached? But no; that can't be. It was the first time a look ever

confused me. No; I outlooked Sir John when he accused me of forging his name; I outlooked the Judge when he sentenced me; I outlooked old Captain Jackson when I entered his service; but that fellow's looks seemed somehow to say, 'I know you,' and as that would be rather inconvenient just now, I turned my eyes away before he could see too much, for I know that sometimes the wolf part of my composition shows itself in my eyes.

512

On reaching Marysville, the party found, on inquiring at the principal hotel, that three men had eaten breakfast there, and that after breakfast two of them had ridden off towards Sacramento, while one was lying asleep on a lounge in the adjoining room. They at once aroused the sleeper, who seemed to be a worthless sort of a scamp.

"Who are the men with whom you came from Empire Ranch last night, Captain?" said De Forest, as soon as he got the fellow's eyes open.

"Well, Colonel, I'll just tell you, if you let us have a little bitters first. My stomach is awful out of order, you see, for I have been up nearly all night."

De Forest threw a half-dollar on the bar, and told the bartender to give him whatever he wanted. The loafer deliberately waited for his drink, put the change of the half-dollar in his pocket as the bar-tender laid it down with his glass, then swallowing about half the contents, he laid the glass back on the bar, with his right hand yet around it, and, facing about to his impatient auditors, with his back to the bar, he said:

"Well, you wanted to know who those gentlemen were with whom I came from Empire Ranch last night? Well, you look as if one of you was the Sheriff and the rest his deputies; but, if you are hunting thieves, I guess you are mistaken this time, if you think my company last night were the chaps; for they are all right and none of that sort.

"Tell us who they were; that is all we want of you."

“Well, that is easily done, gentlemen; and I won't disoblige you, because I drank at your expense, just now.”

“Go on, go on,” said De Forest, “without any more preface.”

“Well, let me begin at the beginning, then. You will understand me better, Colonel, or Sheriff, or whatever you are.”

“Then go on your own way, and tell us, and don't keep us here all day.”

The fellow here swallowed the remainder of his drink and deliberately handed back his glass to the bar-tender and said, looking at De Forest:

“You may as well order the glass filled again, Colonel; I will want it when I get through my story.”

De Forest threw out another half-dollar, saying, with the greatest impatience:

“D—n your story! Tell us who those men were that came with you this morning from Empire Ranch!”

513

“Well, as I was just saying, I arrived in Sacramento a week ago, more or less, broke, gentlemen; yes, ‘strapped’ completely. So I put up at the Golden Eagle Hotel, just as though I had a bag of dust deposited somewhere handy by; but that Callahan that keeps the Eagle is a sharp one, I tell you. So, after I was there two or three days, he came one morning and took me aside in a confidential sort of a way. I knew what was coming, gentlemen, for I had often been there before. Oh, yes; save me from a confidential talk with a landlord or a boarding-house keeper, when I am out of luck and short of coin. But, as I was saying, Callahan took me aside and says: ‘Look here, Ben;’ for my name is Benjam in Shingle, ‘supposing you pay up your bill this morning; for the fact is, I want a little money to pay my butcher's bill with, and I am very short, you know.’ So I said: ‘Mr. Callahan, I want to be honorable with you. It is my way always to act honorable.’ ‘Of course, Ben, it is,’ said

Callahan. 'Well, now, just to act honorable with you, Mr. Callahan, I will mention in confidence, just between ourselves, you know, and you must not let it go any further, that I haven't one d—n dime, or the weight of a York shilling in gold dust, to my name.' Well, gentlemen, if you were to see the sudden change that came in Bill Callahan's face, you could not help laughing; it was so kind of sudden. He put his hand on the back of my neck; yes, right here; it is a sort of stiff yet from the hold he took of it, and rushed me to the door, making long steps, so that his big boot came a sort of heavy against me every step he took. Well, just as we got to the door, who should I see but Jim Becket and an Irish fellow walking with him away from a hack, Jim had just got out of. Well, I knew Jim, for I had often seen him in 'Frisco. I knew he was a high-toned sport, and would help a fellow; so I called to him, and when he came I told him of the little misunderstanding between myself and Bill Callahan; and while he was listening to me, the Irish fellow says: 'And sure, Mr. Becket, he is just the man to take the letter to Mr. Wagner.'"

"And have you such a letter, man?" broke in Walter, in the most intense excitement.

"No, no; hear me out," he continued, while all now stood round him in breathless attention. "So Jim Becket says, 'Well, Ben, I will tell you what I will do; I will pay your bill here at Callahan's and give you twenty dollars spending money, if you will take a letter for me to a place near Downieville, and deliver it safely.' 'It's a whack, Jim,' said I; and he went to write the letter, while I went with the Irish fellow for a horse."

"Well, what have you done with the letter?" demanded Walter and De Forest in one breath.

"Well, if you wait gentlemen, I am just coming to that. After I got the letter, which was directed to 'Walter Wagner, High Canyon, near Downieville,' it was so late in the day that I just put my horse up in another stable, and waited until morning. I then took an early start, and reached Marysville here that evening. Just after I had my supper, I fell in with an old comrade, and after that I have not much recollection of what I did, until last night, when I found myself at Empire Ranch in a little game of bean poker with the very chaps that came with me here this morning."

“But the letter! Tell us where the letter is,” said Walter.

“The letter? Oh, that is all right, as you will hear. I happened to mention to those chaps, as I was playing with them, that I had a letter to carry to one Walter Wagner, and, to my surprise, one of the chaps said: ‘Why, you have? Why *I* am Walter Wagner. Hand me the letter at once.’ ‘All right,’ said I; ‘that is just in my hand, for it saves me a long ride; but business is business,’ said I; ‘so please write me out a receipt, and I will give you the letter.’ So he wrote me this receipt, and I gave him the letter.”

Walter took the receipt from Ben's hand, and found it drawn in form, and signed “Walter Wagner.” At Hilton's suggestion, Walter laid the receipt away in his pocket-book, saying, as he did so:

“Did the fellow open and read the letter?”

“Of course he did; and then they both had a conversation together, and I heard one of them say: ‘Let us get on our horses; we have her now, sure, if we lose no time.’ And with that they both rushed to the stable for their horses. And, as I was now ready to go back to Sacramento, I came as far as here with them.”

“Did Becket say nothing when he gave you the letter, Ben?” asked De Forest, calmly.

“Oh, yes; he said: ‘If you should happen to lose that letter, which I hope you will not do, just tell Walter Wagner that his sister is all safe and well, and that he will find her at Colonel Eaton's, near Sacramento city.’”

515

“Colonel Eaton's,” exclaimed Hilton; “I know him well, and where he lives. She is, of course, safe in that family, provided these villains don't make some treacherous attack upon the house, when the family are off their guard.” And, turning to De Forest, he continued: “Did you order fresh horses?”

“Yes; there they stand, and let us be off.”

The barkeeper, who had been an attentive listener, said:

“Those fellows have at least two hours and a half the start of you, and mind, boys, they are armed to the eyes, and look as if it would be only fun for them to use their irons.”

Now all four are dashing on as fast as they dare ride their horses, with such a long road before them; and Walter and De Forest are far in the lead.

CHAPTER XII.

WAITING—ATTEMPTED ABDUCTION—THE VILLAINS' FATE.

After Becket and Jerry had left for Sacramento, the morning after the rescue, Mrs. Eaton persuaded Minnie to lie down and have a rest. She gladly yielded to the suggestion, and it was late in the afternoon when she awoke, feeling very much refreshed. She glanced around the room, and was surprised and pleased to see Fannie Eaton seated near the window, reading.

“Oh, you are there,” she said; “it does me good to see you. What is the time? I have slept too long, I fear.”

“Oh, no, Miss Minnie, you have not slept too long; after the night you went through, you needed the rest, and mother was so glad to see you sleep so nicely, and told me to watch for your waking, and get you to come down to the sitting-room and have a cup of tea, while you wait for supper.”

“How glad I am that I did not dream of that horrid night. No; it is strange, but in my dreams I was back with my own mother in Newark, and she looked at me so sweetly and kissed me several times, so that I was perfectly happy. How good your dear mother has been to me in receiving me so kindly. But will you not call me just *Minnie*, and not *Miss Minnie*; for it seems to me as if you were my sister or some friend I had always known?”

“Oh, that is easily settled; we will have no *Misses* between us, if you wish it.” And Fanny leaned over Minnie and kissed her affectionately, then continued: “We are sisters, and I am glad of it; for I am, like yourself, an only daughter, and always wanted a sister.”

And so the contract was sealed between those two sweet girls. Yes; a contract that lasted through sunshine and storm, only drawing their hearts closer and closer together, as joy or sorrow came, to throw light or shade on their way. Minnie now felt perfectly at home, and enjoyed the company of the Eatons more and more each day; and it could not be otherwise, for they were refined and educated people, governed in all their actions by the highest honor, and a sense of religious responsibility. Mrs. Eaton continued to remind Minnie all the time of her own good, darling mother. She was so sensible and practical in all her views. The Eatons appeared equally pleased with Minnie, and the Colonel often said: “It appears to me I have found a second daughter.”

The fourth day came, and Minnie's heart all that day bounded at the approach of every footfall, for that was the day she expected to see Walter. She would walk up and down sometimes, and then stop and throw herself into a chair, and, covering her face with her hands, exclaim:

“Oh, Fannie, I cannot, it appears to me, hold out, or wait to see Walter!”

Then Fannie would kiss her and encourage her, and try to attract her attention in every way she could. Night and tea-time came, and no Walter. Minnie could not eat, and grew so uneasy that she had to ask Mrs. Eaton to excuse her from the table. Fannie arose, too, and taking Minnie's arm, walked up and down the little sitting-room, exhorting and encouraging her; but Minnie hardly seemed to hear her.

“What can it be?” she said to Fanny. “What makes me act so like a child? Why, I am no woman at all.” And she took out her handkerchief and wiped her forehead. “Oh, Fannie, I feel that horrid fear coming over me that I felt when I heard that wretch of a man's voice near me on the Senator's deck, the other night. I have the same trembling and the same cold perspiration on my forehead. Oh, put your arm around me, Fannie, and I will feel better.”

Poor Minnie! Can it be that she is warned by a presentiment of some horrid danger close at hand? Fannie grew very much alarmed, and, as she put her arm around Minnie's waist, she said:

“Do not fear, darling Minnie; you know you are safe here. But let me call mother and father. Their presence will reassure you.”

“Oh, no; do not call them. I will be better in a moment. Hark! what was that?” said Minnie, starting erect to listen and turning deadly pale.

In a moment more, there was a knock at the front door. Minnie could not stir from where she stood.

518

“You stay here,” whispered Fannie, “and I will go to the door; and if it should be your brother, I will call you.”

Fannie dashed off, without waiting for Minnie's answer, threw open the door, and there stood a large man, partly concealed by the darkness.

“Is Miss Wagner here?” said the stranger.

“Yes, sir; walk in,” said Fannie.

The stranger replied: “Yes, certainly; for here is her brother Walter at the garden-gate.”

Minnie was listening with intense attention, and, hearing this reply from the stranger, with a cry she dashed past Fannie and was in the arms of the man at the gate, exclaiming:

“Oh, Walter; darling brother!”

But now Minnie's voice suddenly choked and stopped, then burst out in a scream, and again it stopped as if stifled; and Fannie plainly discerned through the darkness a tussle and a struggle, and then all disappeared beyond the gate.

Fannie screams at the top of her voice, and is heard all over the house, "Father! father!" and at the same time rushes to the gate. The two men are on horseback, and Minnie is in the arms of one, as they gallop off; and now Minnie must have recovered her voice again, for her wild shrieks for help are heard through the darkness for a mile around.

Oh, yes; it is heard and answered, too; for with the tramp of horses comes the loud cry of "Coming, coming!" In an instant more, shot after shot is heard, and then is heard Minnie's voice alone, calling out:

"Oh, Walter! Oh, James! are you hurt?" and their answer, "No, no, Minnie; but don't come near us, for God's sake!" On the approach of the horsemen with their cry of "Coming, coming!" the ruffians who had possessed themselves of Minnie by their treacherous stratagem were about to turn and run, but Walter and De Forest were on them too quickly. Walter and the unincumbered man before him fired on each other, on sight. The horse of the ruffian reared up just in time to receive Walter's bullet in its head, and, floundering to the ground, it brought its rider beneath it. In an instant he was Walter's prisoner, with a revolver aimed at his breast. De Forest had not dared to fire, for Minnie's form protected the man who held her, and who was endeavoring with the disengaged hand to fire on him. With fierce impetuosity De Forest dashed in, and with a well-directed blow from his heavy navy revolver felled the man to the ground, and, catching Minnie in his arms, he swung himself from the saddle. Gently laying her down, he sprang upon his fallen foe before he could recover from the blow, and held him down safely, with his foot on his breast and his revolver at his head. Now came Colonel Eaton, followed by some of his farm laborers, with lanterns in hand. After them came Hilton and Captain Ward. The prisoners were properly secured with their arms pinioned tightly behind them, and now Minnie lies sobbing in Walter's arms, while he calls her pet names, caresses her, and bids her be calm. Then Walter whispers:

"Have you spoken to James De Forest?"

Minnie, without answering Walter, turns quickly to look for De Forest, and finds him standing not far behind her. She springs to him and catches both his hands, exclaiming:

“Oh, James; I knew you as you caught me in your arms before you spoke!” Then she slips one arm around his neck, and, drawing him down, kisses his cheek. De Forest could not resist the impulse to catch her up in his arms and return her salute, which he had so well earned.

“There, James,” she whispers as she put both her open hands on his face to gently push him back, “that will do.”

As De Forest relaxed his hold and looked up, his eyes met those of Ward peering down in the darkness on him, with nothing but the sneaking wolf shining out of them. Hilton, who had been active in securing the prisoners, now called out to Walter, saying:

“Walter, let you and De Forest take your sister to the house, while Ward and I will take the prisoners to a place of safety. Colonel Eaton says he can provide for them.”

So Walter, giving his arm to his sister, walked with De Forest in the direction of the house. Ward promptly took charge of Wild and marched him along, while Hilton brought up the rear in charge of the other man, who had given his name as McPherson. Colonel Eaton had found in Hilton an old friend, and remained with him listening to his account of the chance meeting with Becket's messenger, from whom they had discovered the movements of the two ruffians they had just captured.

Ward, finding himself alone with Wild, said: “You are a nice fool to be caught in this way. What do you think will become of you now?”

520

“Oh, I am all right as long as you are here. What a relief I felt when I heard your voice. Where had you better let us escape?”

“Let you escape! That is not such an easy matter as you think, Peter, my boy.”

“Why, yes; you and I can walk a little faster just now. You can undo this cursed rope from my arms, so as to make it appear that I slipped it myself. I can knock you down, you know, and make off in the darkness. What is easier?”

“No, no; I cannot run that risk. That fellow who is in charge of Mack is suspiciously watching all my movements. He is no fool, and would know that I must have connived at your escape. That would put me in a nice fix.”

“Well, what are you going to do, Captain?”

“Well, I can't now tell. I will get you both off, if I can. You were fool enough to forge Wagner's name to a receipt when you took that letter from that fool of a messenger. That alone would send you to San Quentin.”

“I know I did. Therefore, I tell you that in some way, Mr. Captain Ward, you will have to let us loose this very night, even at some risk to yourself, Captain Ward *Lusk*.”

This was said in a defiant tone, with emphasis on the word *Lusk*.

“Oh, is that your game, young man?” said Ward, raising his revolver, cocking it, and placing it close to Wild's ear, as he continued: “I would rather tell my friends here that my prisoner was trying to escape, and that I shot him dead. That will be much safer for me, you know, Mr. Peter Wild!”

“Oh, don't murder me! I ask your pardon, Captain. Do as you think best, and I will be true to the last; but save me in some way.”

This was said in the most abject, cringing tone. Ward lowered his pistol, as he said:

“I thought you must be out of your head. The next time you ever threaten me by word, or even look, or disobey my orders, I will make carrion for the buzzards of your miserable carcass, you cowardly dog!”

“Oh, forgive me, Captain. You know I always served you well; but do not let us go to jail, or they will take us out and hang us, as they did two fellows at Hangtown, a few days ago, for insulting a married woman.”

521

“Well, if a good chance offers, I will get you out before morning; but, you can depend on it, I will save you in some way, even if you do go to jail in Sacramento; and when you get a chance, tell Mack not to fear, as I will in some way save you both.”

“Well, Captain, I will depend on you, and no living being shall hear a word from me. I will keep Mack's mouth shut, too; but do your best to get us out before morning, for I am terribly afraid of going to jail.”

Just then Colonel Eaton and Hilton came up with their prisoner, and all stopped in front of a large grain-bin, that stood apart from all other buildings. It was strongly built, and had in it only one small window and a little door. Into this building the prisoners were thrust, and two stout men, farm-hands of Colonel Eaton, leaped in after them, with revolvers in hand, as guards. They threw some empty gunny-sacks to the prisoners to seat themselves or lie down upon, as they felt inclined. Hanging up a lantern near the doorway, the guards seated themselves comfortably, and entered into conversation, as though nothing had happened. All being deemed secure, Colonel Eaton led the way to the house. As Ward followed, he muttered to himself:

“Yes, Mr. Peter Wild, you signed your own death warrant in that threat you made. You did not know, perhaps, that I never risk a fellow after he once threatens. Yes; your fate is sealed; and while getting you put where your tongue can never become troublesome, I will gain credit with my future wife here—this sweet young lady I am just going to be introduced to.”

When Walter, Minnie and James De Forest came near the house, they met Mrs. Eaton, Fannie, and every one around the place, ready to receive them with every demonstration of joy. Both the ladies hugged and kissed Minnie, and gave way without restraint to their feeling of thankfulness

and delight at her rescue. On reaching the sitting-room, Minnie introduced her brother and James De Forest. When Walter took Fannie's hand, and retained it in his, while he was expressing his gratitude to her for her sisterly care of Minnie, Fannie started, and withdrew her hand in great alarm, exclaiming:

“Oh, Mr. Wagner, you are wounded!” And, as pale as death, she held up her hand covered with blood from his. All eyes turned to Walter's hand, and, sure enough, it was red with running blood. Minnie caught it up, saying:

“Where, where, Walter, do you think you are wounded?”

522

“Oh, do not be alarmed, dear Minnie. Don't mind, Miss Fannie. It cannot be much; for I never felt it.”

Without ceremony, he threw off his coat, and found his shirt- sleeve saturated with blood. Removing this, the wound was exposed. It appeared that the shot fired at him had gone through the fleshy part of his arm. In the excitement, he had never felt it; but it was now bleeding freely. Mrs. Eaton's skill with adhesive plaster and bandages soon staunched the wound, and Walter laughed the matter off as if it was nothing. While Walter was having the wound dressed, somehow his eyes strayed over Minnie's shoulder in search of Fannie's face; and her pale, tearful countenance, as her eyes met his, gave him a peculiar pleasure he had never in his life felt before.

“How like Minnie she is,” he thought to himself.

At De Forest's suggestion, Walter let his wounded arm rest in a sling. Just as all this was arranged, Colonel Eaton appeared with Hilton and Captain Ward. The Colonel introduced them to his wife and daughter, and Minnie was most cordial to them both, calling them her deliverers, and saying everything to show her gratitude for the share they had taken in her rescue. Captain Ward was apparently in the best good-humor.

“I am only sorry, Miss Minnie,” he said, “that it was not I who had the honor of taking you from that villain, Wild; or that it was not I who was wounded in your defence; but I shall try, by future devotion to your interest, and to that of all your friends here, to show that I am worthy of at least being counted as one of your friends.”

“You have given ample proof of that already, Captain Ward, I am sure; and I would be very ungrateful if I did not fully appreciate your services, and look forward with hope for some opportunity to show you how highly I value them.”

The Captain bowed and smiled, while he let his large, dark eyes fall full on hers, as he said:

“Oh, Miss Minnie; you make me most happy by making me think that you believe yourself in my debt.”

As Minnie's eyes looked into his, they did not flinch, nor draw back, for something for an instant fascinated her, and then a loathing, repulsive sensation darted through her like an electric shock, and seemed to say to her plainly:

“Beware; he is a villain!”

Ward withdrew his eyes in a sort of confusion, as though he felt that Minnie had done just what Brown had warned him she would do— *read him through and through*. Before Minnie had time to recover her former manner, and acknowledge Ward's last speech, Walter said:

“Captain, you are very gallant, I acknowledge, to wish to have this wound; as, besides the great inconvenience it is likely to be for a few days, it pains me very much just now, I assure you.”

“Oh, if there was nothing disagreeable about it, of course there would be no merit in taking it; and I would then make no progress in Miss Minnie's favor, which is what I prize above all things. I felt so before I saw her, because your description of your sister fascinated me.”

“Why, brother Walter!” said Minnie, half-annoyed, “have you been talking so foolishly about me to strangers?”

“Oh, sister Minnie, I did say something about you to my friends, and only because I supposed they never would see you. They were friends, however, and not strangers; but yet I would not have said a word about you, had I the least idea at that time that you were on your way out to me.”

“I am compelled to say, Miss Minnie,” said the Captain, “that you cannot find fault with your brother, for to-night I see he was so moderate as to have told only half the truth.”

To this speech Minnie only bowed in acknowledgment, making an effort to smile, for somehow she now found the Captain's gallant speeches were excessively disagreeable to her. She felt like one who was warned that those compliments not only meant nothing, but that they were used to cover some ulterior purpose. She combated this feeling, and tried to shake it off, as unreasonable and unjust to a man who was her brother's friend, and whose conduct towards herself was, thus far, unexceptionable; but to do this required an effort of thought and will that she was not always on her guard to use. So, though in future very polite to the Captain, it was politeness squared by the strict rules of society, with nothing of those thousand and one natural little off-hand actions, gestures and bright, genuine smiles, that throw a charm into the intercourse of friends who both respect and admire each other.

While Minnie was engaged in this conversation with the Captain, she noticed that De Forest looked annoyed and uneasy. “Perhaps,” thought she, “James De Forest knows more of 524 this Captain Ward than Walter does; for I can see he dislikes him. I will ask him to-morrow.”

Then Mrs. Eaton came to announce that a lunch was ready for the four newcomers. Thanking Mrs. Eaton for her hospitality, they sat down and ate as hungry men do after a hard ride and a long fast. Fannie, by her mother's request, presided at the table, and Minnie sat by Walter to cut his meat, as he feared to use his arm carelessly. The conversation became general, and all seemed almost to have forgotten the frightful events of the day, in the enjoyment of their present safety. After supper, it

was arranged that, Walter being excused on account of his wound, all the other men should in turn watch with the guard over the prisoners until daylight.

At the dawn of day, no unnecessary time was lost in taking the prisoners to Sacramento, to have them regularly examined before a Justice and committed formally to jail, to await their trial. Colonel Eaton furnished the necessary wagon to convey the prisoners, and the rest of the party acted as a guard on horseback, Walter remaining behind, as his wound began to give him considerable trouble. It was agreed, also, that it was unnecessary for Isaac Hilton to accompany them; so, bidding them all a cordial farewell, and, telling Minnie he wanted to go back to fix things up for her in High Canyon, he rode off in the direction of Marysville. The news of the attack on Colonel Eaton's house had reached the city of Sacramento in an hour after its occurrence, and excited the greatest indignation. The story ran in a hundred ways, mostly greatly exaggerated. One had it that Miss Fannie Eaton, so universally beloved, had been shot by a friend of her own, while he was trying to save her from some ruffian who was in the act of carrying her off. Another, that a beautiful young lady friend of Miss Fannie, who had just arrived from the East, on a visit to her, was carried off, and that Colonel Eaton had been killed while trying to rescue her. And many yet more extravagant versions of the matter were repeated from mouth to mouth. Morning came, and the news spread in every direction, so that by the time the prisoners arrived in the city, it was known in many of the nearest mining districts. Every one seemed interested, and all, as they heard the news, threw down their mining tools or whatever they had in hand, and rushed towards the city to learn the truth. Colonel Eaton had the wagon with the prisoners driven direct to the office of the 525 District Attorney. After inquiring into the facts, this officer told the Colonel that it would be necessary for the ladies of the house and Walter all to be present at the examination, and that until they arrived the prisoners would be handed over to the Sheriff for safe keeping. De Forest now went for a carriage to go back for Walter and the ladies. Colonel Eaton did not forget our friend, Jerry Brady, who had amused him so much the day he brought Minnie to his house. So it was Jerry's carriage De Forest engaged. He found Jerry in the highest state of excitement; for he had just heard a terribly exaggerated account of the attack on the Colonel's house.

“So you tell me, sir,” exclaimed Jerry, “that Miss Minnie and the other ladies are all unharmed, and only Miss Minnie's brother a little wounded? Glory be to God!”

“That is all, Jerry; you may depend on it.”

“And the ladies are going to come in and testify against those two ruffians? Is that what's going to be done, sir?”

“Yes, Jerry; the District Attorney wants their statement under oath.”

“Well, sir, then all this business will end to-day, sure?” said Jerry, looking solemn, and speaking in a suppressed voice.

“What do you mean, Jerry?”

“Mean, sir! I mean that if Miss Minnie Wagner ever gets up in a crowded courtroom, and tells all them miners that such and such a man attempted wickedness towards her, in a moment more no man in all that crowd will be his own master. No, sir; for I tell you that Miss Minnie is so handsome and innocent-looking, and her voice is a voice just lent to her by some angel, I suppose, to let us know what sort of voices there are in Heaven, and to make us want to get there—the Lord be praised! It will go right to the heart like, of every man present, who has a mother, a wife or a sister, that he has been thinking and dreaming about ever since he left them away back in his old home; and before he knows what he is doing, he will be pulling the ropes that will swing them two villains; and the sun, as it goes down to-night, will shine on their dead bodies. So, as I said, sir, this day will close this business, I am thinking.”

“I hope you are mistaken, Jerry; for I am opposed to that sort of lynch-law executions, for more harm comes from them than good.”

“Yes, sir; so I say, too; and many a poor soul is sent in that 526 way to its last reckoning, all unprepared-the Lord save us! For who is the man that could hope to find his account all right at the other side, if sent out of this world in that sudden sort of a way? God forgive us our own sins!”

This delay of sending for Walter and the ladies obliged the examination to be deferred until two o'clock in the afternoon. Now came one of those extraordinary excitements, often witnessed in the early days of California. It spread like a conflagration, until more than a thousand men stood waiting for the examination, near Justice Howard's office, not far from the steamboat landing. All the police force at the command of the authorities was assembled at this place, and the Justice, in obedience to a general wish, removed his desk, seats and chairs into a large, new storeroom, then just being finished, near his office. The hour came. The immense room was filled to overflowing. A bustle in the crowd near the door was now heard, and, after a voice of authority demanded it, the crowd opened, and Wild and McPherson were marched up to the Justice's desk, handcuffed together, and guarded by a strong force under command of the Sheriff of the county. The District Attorney now read the complaint sworn to by Colonel Wm. Eaton. A short, red-faced man, of the name of Strutt, announced himself as attorney for the prisoners, and began by making objections to the form of complaint. The Justice overruled the objections with some impatience, and ordered the examination to proceed.

“Go on, Mr. Justice,” said Strutt, “and I will soon get your work set aside by the Court above.”

The District Attorney reminded Mr. Strutt that this proceeding was only an examination preliminary to committing the prisoners for trial, but Strutt persisted in objecting to everything, always turning around towards the crowd and throwing up his little red face as he exclaimed:

“All right, Mr. Justice; I will have all this work set aside by the Court above.”

The murmurs and expressions that now and then broke from the audience showed that they were enduring Mr. Strutt's conduct with great impatience; but the more impatient the crowd appeared, the greater were Mr. Strutt's efforts to thwart the proceeding, seeming to think that this was a fine

opportunity to advertise his talents and ability, and that he must improve it to the utmost. The increasing murmurings of dissatisfaction 527 were suddenly hushed, and all eyes were turned to the doorway, where the crowd were opening, in obedience to a loud demand from the Deputy-Sheriff. Then, as the crowd parted, Walter advanced, with Minnie leaning on one arm, while the other rested in a sling. Then came the tall form of Colonel Eaton with Mrs. Eaton. Then the manly form of James De Forest, with Fanny on his arm. It is impossible, my young readers, to describe the effect of this sight on that crowd of stalwart California miners. It was such as could only be produced by the peculiar circumstances and the times in which the scene transpired. To look at this crowd as they stood there in that house, with their unshaven faces, blue and red miners' shirts, Chinese red silk sashes around their waists, every one with his revolver and bowie-knife adjusted in his belt, they appeared like one vast band of robbers and outlaws. But was it so? No; in that crowd stood the representatives of a thousand worthy families living in a thousand different places in the old States of the Union, nine-tenths of them honoring and loving their old firesides and all the sweet associations of their homes with unchanged love, only intensified by long absence from them and the almost total deprivation of the charms of ladies' society, such as they had there always enjoyed. At the sight now before them of a beautiful girl leaning on her wounded brother's arm, followed by the well-known and highly respected wife of Colonel Eaton and her charming daughter, the excitement became terrible; but not a movement was made nor a sound heard but the light tread of the advancing party. Breathing seemed suspended, so still was that vast assembly. When the Justice asked Minnie to raise up her hand to be sworn, the oath was repeated to her and she bowed in assent, lowered her hand, and took her seat between Walter and Mrs. Eaton. The District Attorney then asked her to tell the Court the circumstances of her capture at Colonel Eaton's residence, and if she recognized as here present the persons who committed the act. Then Minnie's musical, clear voice, though a little tremulous, was heard distinctly by every individual in the whole building, relating the treacherous way in which she had been captured, and of her subsequent rescue by Walter and James De Forest. Not an intonation of her voice escaped the hungry ears of the excited assembly.

As Minnie concluded by saying, “I recognize those two men seated near you, Judge, as the men who caught me and put me 528 on that man's horse,” pointing to Wild as she spoke—the effect was beyond the greatest imagination. No one yet moved, but strong men trembled, while tears ran down their sunburnt cheeks. Oh, it was that Minnie's sweet, innocent, woman's voice took them back in feeling and memory to boyhood and early manhood, where a mother, a wife, a daughter, a sister, or it may be a sweetheart, rose up before them in beauty; such as in dreams the imagination decks the loved ones of the past, swelling their hearts with wild devotion to the good and the pure of the whole sex. They realized at that moment, perhaps, how dark and dismal would be our journey through life, if God, in his goodness, had not sent us woman to cheer us on by strewing the rugged parts of our path with alluring flowers, and by lighting up our way with the bright sunshine of her smiles, when sometimes obscured by terribly dark clouds of fortune. Under the influence of these overpowering feelings, the miners regarded the prisoners before them as monsters, whose instant destruction could alone atone for their daring attempt against all they held dear in woman. While Minnie was speaking, even Strutt forgot his own importance, and remained fascinated, with his eyes on her face. Now, recovering himself, he jumped to his feet, and began:

“Mr. Justice, I totally object—”

He proceeded no further, because an iron grasp was on his throat, and another low down on his back, and in an instant he felt himself high in the air, while the powerful fellow who held him aloft, called out:

“Boys, what shall we do with the scalawag?”

“Hang him!” “Choke him!” “Throw him out doors!” shouted everybody. And then came the additional cry: “Drag out those Sydney ducks! We will give them all the law they want! Drag them out! Drag them out!” then burst from the whole assembly, while revolvers leaped into view all around.

Minnie, Mrs. Eaton and Fannie stood close together, with Colonel Eaton, De Forest and Walter standing with their backs to them, and their faces towards the now wild crowd. The Sheriff and his deputies stood with their revolvers in hand; but, feeling themselves utterly powerless, remained inactive, uncer-what to do. Justice Howard leaped on a chair, and, calling out in a clear, commanding voice, such as even a mob will sometimes listen to:

529

“Californians, do you forget that ladies are present? If you are the men I take you for, in respect to the presence of those ladies, you will at once put up your weapons and remain quiet.”

“That is right! That is right!” sang out a hundred voices at once. And in an instant more a general quiet reigned through-out the building. Poor little Strutt, finding his throat released, squirmed his way through the crowd to the door, and made the shortest time on record, in a foot-race, to the nearest saloon, where he poured all sorts of drinks down his throat. “Just to see,” he said, “that, though sore on the outside, it was all right on the inside.” He complained, too, of soreness on the back part of his person, where some one had given him a terrible propeller with his boot, as he was making his exit from the building. “It felt,” he said, “as if he had been sitting on a red-hot stove.”

The Justice remained standing on the chair, with his eyes fastened on the crowd, as if with their power he charmed them into good order. But he himself well knew the talisman whose power had done the work, and he now continued:

“Thank you, fellow-citizens, in the name of the ladies here present, for restoring order, and I now wish to say to you, that I will forthwith commit the prisoners for trial without further examination; and, in the name of the ladies, I will ask you to retire from the building without any disturbance, so that they may have a free passage, and the Sheriff an opportunity to do his duty and take the prisoners to jail. Without a word of objection, all turned to leave the building. During all the time these scenes were enacting in the building, Captain Ward remained outside, moving about among the mass of people who could not get in, apparently in a heated excitement of indignation at the villainy of the prisoners.

“What is the use, boys,” he would say, “of going through the forms of law with these Sydney villains? No; let us have a wagon ready to pitch the rascals into as soon as the Sheriff brings them out, and let us take them to the nearest tree and up with them. Yes; we must protect the few ladies among us at all hazards.”

His auditors were but too well inclined to agree with him. While he was talking to a crowd in this way, a boy pushed his way up to him, saying:

“Is your name Captain Ward, sir?”

“Yes, boy; what do you want?”

530

The boy motioned him to follow a little way, and then handed him a note, saying:

“Mr. Strutt told me to bring him an answer, sir; and that he would give me an ounce for it.”

Without speaking, Ward read the note. It was written on a half-sheet of foolscap. The hand-writing was evidently that of a person who usually wrote a good hand, but who now wrote under great excitement, and in a tremulous, unsteady manner. It was as follows:

LUSK:—I am not to be trifled with. You have not come near me, though I have repeatedly sent for you. If you do not instantly come, and explain, to our full satisfaction, how you are going to save us from this fix, I will, just as soon as I get back to the jail, make a full confession of everything I know. You know I can prove to the authorities all I will tell them, and that this will swing you, and save my own life. So, you now see, I am not to be fooled with. No letters or promises sent by others will do; so, now, you know what to expect, and who you are dealing with.

WILD.

As Ward finished reading, a bitter, sarcastic smile curled his lip, and he said, half-aloud: “The trouble is that *you* don't know who *you* are dealing with. Yes; when you get back to the jail. Yes; then you can do as you like; that is all.”

Then aloud, to the boy, he spoke: “Wait a moment, boy, and I will give you the answer; and be sure you make that fellow give you the ounce before you give him the note.”

“All right, Captain; I will do that.”

Ward remained in thought for a moment, and then walked into a grocery store near by, got a sheet of paper and wrote in the center of it: “I will see you as requested.” And, without signing it, folded the paper, put it in an envelope, and gave it to the boy. The crowd now came rushing out of the building, and, parting into two bodies, one at each side of the door-way, as if by preconcerted action, until at last came the Sheriff with his prisoners. Then arose a terrific shout, then a rush, and, in a moment more, the prisoners were flung into the large spring-wagon Ward had just driven up. The crowd now fell into silence like that of a funeral, and, without an apparent direction from any one, or a visible leader, made off to a well-known tree, with spreading limbs, in the outskirts of the city, near the river. The wagon halts beneath the beautiful spreading shade of the tree, that is all unconscious of the bloody work it is to be used for. The ropes necessary are found all prepared in the wagon, with 531 small ones to pinion the arms. In a moment more, the prisoners are compelled to mount the high seat of the wagon, and stand erect on it, and, while yet handcuffed together, as the Sheriff had them, their arms are fastened, and the fatal ropes adjusted around their necks; then drawn over a limb and fastened to the butt of the tree. The horses are impatiently champing on their bits, so that the driver has all he can do to hold them until he receives the signal to let them go, which will plunge the two miserable men into eternity. In this last moment of time, all hope of rescue by Ward's assistance leaves Wild, and he now calls out:

“Only spare my life for five minutes, and I will give you information that will be most valuable to you, and the truth of which I can prove to your full satisfaction.”

“Hear him!” “Hear him!” cried out a hundred voices.

As Wild spoke, he glanced all around the crowd, and his eyes at last rested on the tall form of Ward, standing near the horses' heads.

“There,” said Wild, “is the very man I want to tell you about. He is the Captain of all the Sydney thieves in the State.”

All eyes were turned in the direction Wild indicated by his look only, for his hands were pinioned down, and each one, in that part of the crowd, looked at his neighbor with suspicion.

“What man do you mean?” called out Ward, boldly, while, as if jumping forward to hear the answer, he pressed against the horses' heads, and, dextrously using his knife, severed the reins. In an instant, the impatient animals were plunging forward, reckless of everything. Ward took care to be one of those struck to the ground in the confusion. Then the two wretched men swung backwards and forwards, writhing in the last agonies of a fearful death, while the crowd looked on in profound silence, with uncovered heads, which made the scene as solemn as it was terrible. As Ward arose from the ground, his first expression was:

“Oh, what a pity that fellow did not get a chance to finish what he had begun to tell us! But, however,” he continued, “it is of no consequence, as I suppose the rascal was only trying to gain time.”

Then, looking up to the two swinging, lifeless bodies, a demoniac smile played around his wolfish eyes, as he said to himself:

532

“I managed this business well. That fellow Wild was the only man in my whole gang I feared; but he will never again write me threatening letters or interfere with my plans in regard to this proud beauty, who is to be my future wife, which, if he had lived, he might have attempted. That fellow

McPherson was a sort of useful dog to have about, but I could not save him, and get Wild hung; so I had to let them both swing.”

When the crowd rushed from the building after the examination, Minnie and Walter and their friends followed slowly, and, on reaching the sidewalk, they found the street completely deserted.

“Why! Where is the immense crowd gone?” exclaimed the ladies, in surprise.

No one could tell, and, without pressing the inquiry, the whole party proceeded to the hotel and ordered refreshments. A little before sunset, Jerry Brady called to ask if his carriage was wanted to take the ladies back to Colonel Eaton's. Yes; it was wanted, of course.

“Well, Mr. De Forest,” said Jerry, “it came out just as I told you it would; that sun we see just setting, is shining on the dead bodies of those two Sydney villains, hanging on the big tree, down close to the river, all alone, without a friend to bury them.”

The sudden disappearance of the crowd was now explained, and when the ladies were informed of what had happened a sensation of sickening horror completely overcame them. California, however, was not then the place to brood over the events past, and that could not be recalled. No; the present and the future were always demanding our time and energy; for on, on, we were rushing, always pressing a month's work into a day's time. Colonel and Mrs. Eaton insisted on Minnie, Walter and De Forest returning with them that evening, and they yielded, as they found it hard to part with friends who had, even on so short an acquaintance, become so very dear to them. Then Walter was feverish, and half-sick from his wound, and Mrs. Eaton urged the necessity of absolute repose and quiet, such as he could only have at her house. So Jerry Brady once more dashed over the road, and, early in the evening of that anxious day, deposited them all in safety at Colonel Eaton's hospitable residence.

CHAPTER XIII.

A VISIT FROM CAPTAIN WARD—SOMBER THOUGHTS.

The morning after the execution of Wild and McPherson, Walter found himself so much worse, that it was deemed advisable to send for medical advice. Dr. White, who came from Sacramento in answer to the call, examined the wound and found it very much inflamed, and the symptoms pointed to the possible danger from erysipelas. The Doctor privately informed Colonel Eaton and James De Forest of his apprehensions, and of the necessity of using the most active remedies to ward off the disease. He also counseled the most careful nursing. This state of things induced De Forest to defer his departure for a day or two longer; for, although Walter had of course the best possible nurses in Minnie and Mrs. Eaton, yet his anxiety for his friend's safety would not permit his leaving until he should feel assured of his safety. In the course of the morning of that same day, Captain Ward called to pay his respects to the ladies, and inquire for his friend Walter. The ladies were all very polite to him, and Minnie, after informing him of the Doctor's general injunction against visitors being permitted to see Walter, said:

“But my brother thinks so much of you, Captain, that I think it would do him more good than harm if he were to see you for a few minutes.”

Ward looked delighted at this speech from Minnie, as he said:

“Oh, well; the dear fellow and I have become very much attached to each other; but I feared that my nose was out of joint now that his sweet sister was here to stay by him; for the fact is, I believe, I made my way to his friendship and heart by talking so much of you, Miss Minnie, which I could not help doing after I saw your likeness and heard his description of you, which I find, after all, only told a little of the truth.”

To stop these sort of broad compliments, which no woman of sense relishes, for she knows that they generally come from hollow heads and hollow hearts, Minnie arose and said:

534

“I will lead the way to my brother's room, Captain, if you wish.”

James De Forest, who was seated by Walter's bed, recognized Ward's voice, as he followed Minnie up the stairway, and, not wishing to have any conversation with him, arose to go, intending only to bow to the Captain as he passed him; but Ward stopped short, directly in front of him, and reached out his hand, exclaiming:

“My dear fellow, how are you after the excitement of yesterday? I am glad to see you looking so well. Well, we fixed those Sydney rascals nicely. I was out there and saw their last kick. The villains died hard, I can tell you; but die they had to. Now Miss Minnie here has her revenge. I kept up the steam among the boys while the examination was going on, so the whole thing went off like a charm.” And Ward, as he stopped speaking, chuckled out what he intended for a laugh.

De Forest withdrew his hand with a feeling of indescribable loathing, while he dropped his eyes on Ward's face, then down his whole person to his feet, and withdrew them, and, without speaking a word, passed quickly down the stairs. Ward was, of course, disconcerted; for there is no man on earth, be he ever so bold in impudence, so callous to contemptuous treatment, who can stand that sort of a review of his person unflinchingly. Recovering himself, however, he said to Minnie:

“What is the matter with our friend, De Forest? He has a strange way of acting.” Then, assuming a pleasant voice, and dropping his head very close to Minnie's face, he continued: “Oh, Miss Minnie, I see the poor fellow is jealous, so I forgive him. Yes; he cannot help it; so, as I said, I forgive him; for I know how I should feel if any good-looking man should successfully get himself between me and your smiles, Miss Minnie.”

Minnie felt her face burn, while every word the Captain said added to her disgust of the man. Ward continued, with a sort of knowing smile:

“Oh, how I should like to have been in De Forest's place the night before last, to get that reward I saw you give him for saving you. Oh, Miss Minnie,” and here he lowered his voice and tried to give it a love-sick tone, “can I ever hope to deserve such a reward? It was to win my way with you I worked so hard yesterday in getting those men properly disposed of.”

Minnie's horror was now equal to her disgust, and she would have answered Ward in a way that would have satisfied him that he had made a great blunder in this first attempt to win favor with her; but they were now by Walter's bed, and she only said, as she turned to leave the room:

“I am surprised, Captain Ward, how you could for a moment suppose that I, or my brother, approved that horrid proceeding of yesterday.”

Ward bit his lips, as his eyes followed Minnie's retiring figure down the stairway, and then, turning to Walter, he began to express himself as greatly concerned for him.

“Oh; do not be alarmed, dear friend; the Doctor says that all I want is quiet and good nursing, both of which I am sure of here.”

Then Ward asked Walter if he would not wish him to stay and help to nurse him.

“Nothing would suit me better, Captain; but I have all the nurses that I want, and I dare not trespass on the hospitality of this good family by encouraging any more persons remaining near me, and particularly when they can do no good.”

“When does De Forest return to Oregon?” asked Ward, in a careless tone.

“To-morrow, or the day after at farthest. My sister will be all the nurse I shall want.”

“And Miss Fannie?” added Ward, with a knowing smile.

“Oh, yes, Captain; and Miss Fannie, as you say; for it will surely do me no harm to know that so sweet a girl is helping Minnie.”

“Not a bit of it! And I don't blame you, my dear fellow, for being a little soft in that direction. I might have been so myself if all my attention was not absorbed in another direction.”

“Oh, indeed,” said Walter, not appearing to understand to whom the Captain alluded; “I did not suppose a man like you, who had seen all the beautiful women of the world, you may say, would be easily thrown off his guard, or yield to that sort of feelings.”

Ward now assumed a more serious manner and tone, as he said:

“Nor am I easily moved, friend Wagner, I can assure you. I have, as you say, seen many charming women, and, though warm and ardent in my temperament, I assure you, as we are both here alone, and feeling sure you will not doubt your friend's 536 word, that my heart was never touched until within the last few days.”

This was too plain a speech for Walter to be able to pretend to wholly misunderstand; so he just said:

“I see, Captain, you are new in these matters, sure enough; or you would know that these sudden fancies are never lasting.” Ward was going to reply, when Walter added: “But let us change the subject, Captain. When do you go down to the bay?”

“Oh, I will go in this evening's boat, as I cannot be of any use to you here.” And, as he drew out his watch, he added: “By Jove! I have not a moment to lose.” And, rising, he took Walter's hand and shook it furiously, saying: “Good bye, my dear friend. Write to me just as soon and as often as you can. Direct your letters to the care of McConroy & Co., in San Francisco. They did all my shipping business, and are first-rate men. Be sure to let me know as soon as you get back to Downieville, as I have a business proposition to make to you. So, again, good-by, my dear fellow.” Then, pausing a second, and lowering his voice, he added: “You will one day find, friend Walter, that you did me injustice in supposing that the feeling I alluded to, just a minute ago, can ever change. No; my life has now a new object, and an object that will spur me on to any sacrifice to attain it. Be my friend, Walter, in this matter, and you will never regret it; depend on that.”

Ward was gone before Walter could say a word in the way of an answer. On descending to the sitting-room, he found Mrs. Eaton and Fannie there alone, and, in answer to his inquiries, Mrs.

Eaton told him that Minnie and De Forest had gone out to walk with Colonel Eaton. She asked the Captain to take a seat and wait for their return, but he said it was impossible for him to do so, as he had to go to San Francisco that evening, and he feared missing the boat. In a minute more he was urging his horse towards Sacramento. As he rode, he talked to himself thus:

“The confounded little hussy does not yield a bit. When she is standing near that fellow De Forest, she looks as soft and gentle as a child of five years, and when he speaks she looks at him with a smile that must bewitch the fellow, and it makes me hate him. Yes; you can see that she believes all he tells her to be true; but when she is near me, there is something about her 537 whole bearing and manner that says to me, so that I can't misunderstand it: ‘I understand you, sir. I have read all about you in your own eyes, and your compliments are disgusting to me. Take them to the silly women you are accustomed to, who are such fools as to be pleased with them.’ Yes; Brown must be right. This Yankee girl has read me right through; but I will not give her up, for there was more truth than I believe I spoke in twenty years in what I told Wagner to-day, as to this girl being the only woman who ever touched my feelings. I see I will have a difficult task to trap her. Yes; Brown was right. My villainous father's game was nothing to this that I will have to play. But I will triumph, for I will stop at nothing to effect my purpose. Surely the wolf and the lion together ought to be a match for anything that could come from this cool, calculating Yankee stock. The emblem of the Yankee is the great eagle, that soars so high above all earthly things, that when he gazes at it, away above the dark clouds, he forgets or half despises the natural business of life, which is for every man to outwit his neighbor to the utmost of his ability, and he foolishly begins to think of all that is noble, generous and great. And those sort of ideas tend to produce such girls as this Minnie Wagner, to the annoyance of all dashing, liberal-minded fellows like myself. No; give me the lion, with the wolf mixed in, as an emblem to inspire my actions. They live in dark caves and treacherous jungles, where villainy always has a home; and they, like me, devour the good and the bad, without mercy, for their own gratification. ‘*Might,*’ not ‘*Right,*’ is the motto of monarchs; and I am a monarch in my way, for I acknowledge no superior power. What chance is there, then, Miss Minnie Wagner, for you to balk my appetite? I have sworn to marry women that I fancied, and hunted them down to their ruin; but when I swore that, I knew I was lying; but this girl has, in fact,

got some unaccountable hold on me. I love and hate her both. The idea that I should love anything, living or dead, is an absurdity; but I suppose the wolf part of me hates her, and the lion part of me loves her. Yes; it is strange. She comes to me in my dreams, looking so proud and beautiful; and then it appears to me I am a man like other men, and I love her truly and wildly, and I go on my knees to swear that I will be faithful to her; and when I look up, she is gone, and in her place stands a hideous demon, laughing at me. Or sometimes it is Harry West, the boy I murdered that Sunday morning in the canal, when I was only a boy myself. 538 And when he appears to me now, he always comes with the same look out of his eyes he had that morning, when I sat on the bank of the canal, pushing him back into the water every time he tried to scramble out, while crying for mercy until he could cry no more, and was dead. And then I laugh out loud in my sleep, as I did that morning when I flung him back for the last time, and that wakes me up. I wonder why such dreams come to me now, for I surely have a long career before me yet. Sailors say such dreams always come just before death to sea-faring men, but I am no superstitious fool to believe in such stuff as that. When I get to the bay, I will begin to put my plans in motion. There is no time to lose, for my boys are getting more and more unpopular in San Francisco every day. De Forest goes to Oregon the day after to-morrow. Well, I will have to take his case into consideration, for the sooner she hears he is dead, the sooner she will be over it, for she loves the fellow as she loves her life. I can see that, though she does not perhaps know it herself, and fancies she loves no one but her mother and brother. I would just like to see her when she hears of it; that would pay me for having had to look on when De Forest kissed her the other night. Then the lion part of me will feel sorry for her, and I will comfort her, and then I will press my suit, and I will take care that it will be of great advantage to Walter that she should marry me, and then her devotion to him will accomplish the rest. Then, as I before planned, her poor, dear brother will suddenly die, and the sails of the Blue Bell will be unfurled, and the proud Yankee bird, as I told Brown, will flutter its clipped wings around my feet on the quarter-deck, and John Ward will once more be Captain John Cameron Ward Lusk, on the great, wide ocean intended for men like me. Oh, yes; all this will I do. On! on! you miserable horse; I am in a hurry! Why have you not wings for such an occasion as this?"

CHAPTER XIV.

JAMES DE FOREST AND MINNIE—THE COLONEL's CATTLE.

When James De Forest left Walter's sick-room to let Ward take his place, he repaired to the sitting-room, and there commenced walking up and down with an impatient, quick tread, as he said to himself:

“I cannot for the life of me see how it is that Walter has taken such a fancy to that man. I dislike to tell him what I think of him, lest he should misunderstand my motives, and think I was jealous on account of Minnie. Jealous, indeed! If Minnie is the sort of girl that could ever be caught by that heartless fellow, then she is not the girl I take her for. I believe I will put Minnie herself on her guard, and get her to talk to Walter. But, no; that will not do either. How do I know but that she might misunderstand me? No; I will just let the thing work out its own cure; for I am satisfied that Minnie's own intelligence will guard her. As for me, there is one thing certain: If I do not marry Minnie, I never will marry any woman on earth. Yes; that is a fixed fact. I wonder if she thinks anything about me more than as a sort of a brother? I know she likes me as Walter's friend, but that is not what I want. I want her to think of me as I do of her. I have a mind to come right out to her about it; but if I do, it will look as if I feared this fellow Ward; and then Walter is sick, and she is not fairly settled at home yet, and it would look as if I came down just to take her away from Walter. No; I will wait for a little time, until they are nicely settled down at home. Then I will come back, and have a plain talk with her and Walter both, which will decide if I am ever to be married or not.” Then De Forest dropped into a deep reverie, and after a while he murmured: “I wonder if she has that rose-bud yet. I dislike to ask her, but I would like to know so much.” Then he paused, and then added: “Yes; every day of 540 her life she grows more charming.” Then another long pause comes, and then his thoughts appear in low, murmured words: “Oh, yes; Fannie would do nicely for Walter; she is so sweet, and so like Minnie.” Then he walks very slowly, with his hands clasped behind his back, his head dropped forward, and a vision of a supremely happy day in the future is plainly before him. Minnie stands by his side, leaning on his arm. She is looking up with her sweetest smile, while she shows him the rose-bud. Then the scene runs on somewhat in confusion; but in it is a church, an altar, white dresses, and orange-blossoms, a double marriage, a feast. All

his senses are fascinated, and he does not see that Colonel Eaton and Minnie are standing in the doorway, looking and smiling at his deep, brown study. Minnie at length exclaims:

“James, what in the world are you dreaming of? Just do tell us.”

De Forest starts, looks up, and joins in a laugh with Minnie and Colonel Eaton.

“Oh, I will not tell you what I was thinking of; but I will just say that I take it as a good omen that it was you I first saw when I awoke from a pleasant day-dream.”

The Colonel then explained that he had come for him to join them in a walk to look at some young cattle he had just imported from Kentucky. So, off they started, Minnie taking De Forest's arm without waiting to be asked.

Colonel Eaton, who remembered his own young days, very considerately, on some pretence, walked ahead, as he said to himself: “I see that poor fellow is badly in for it, and, to say the truth, I don't much blame him in this case. So, let him have a chance to tell her what he was thinking of in that brown study we aroused him from. I know without his telling me.”

“Well, you won't tell me what you were thinking of that time?” said Minnie, laughing; “but I suppose you were dreaming that Oregon was a great State, just admitted into the Union, and that you were elected her first Governor, and that all the people had assembled to see you inaugurated.”

“No, no, Minnie; you do not guess one bit right,” said James, catching up Minnie's laughing way; “for in my dream *you* were the Governor and the one all eyes were turned on.”

“Ah, how was that? Who else was there?”

James dropped his voice lower, and said: “I was there, and Walter and Fannie Eaton were there.”

He felt Minnie's hand start as it rested on his arm. For a moment her eyes dropped, and she evidently had to make an effort to continue her sportive way of talking.

“Oh,” she said, “that must have been a tame sort of day-dream. Why, if I was a man and wanted to indulge in a day-dream, I would fancy myself walking into the White House at Washington, with all the representatives of all the nations of the earth to see me take my seat as President of this great republic. Or I would see myself a General at the head of a victorious army, with all the people crowding around to do me honor.”

And then, without giving James time to say a word as a rejoinder, she withdrew her arm, and, running to where a bunch of beautiful California violets were blooming, she picked a handful. Returning to De Forest, she selected one out of the bunch, and handed it to him, saying: “Take that; you know you once gave me a rose-bud; so you are repaid, and we are even now.”

De Forest took it, and, not knowing exactly how to interpret the gift in the way it was given, said: “Well, I will take it, and if I lose, it I suppose the fate of the flowers will be exactly the same—”

“Oh, then you suspect that I lost your gift, I see. Can you think that I would treat a friend of Walter's that way?”

“A friend of Walter's,” said De Forest, slowly. “Supposing Captain Ward, who is a friend of Walter's, you know, was to present you with a flower, would you take care of it?”

Minnie started at the sound of Ward's name, changed color slightly, and said: “Captain Ward will never give me a flower, or any other gift. There is no danger of that.”

“Oh, but if he did, Minnie; for he looks to me as if he could command impudence for anything.” De Forest spoke with a warmth that betrayed his dislike to Ward.

A shade of half-regret and perplexity passed over Minnie's face, as she said: "Oh, well, let us not talk of him; for, as you say, he is Walter's friend, and I do not know him much, and, most likely, never will."

James made no reply, but turned his eyes away from Minnie, as if struggling with some inward feeling. He let them rest for a moment on the violet in his hand. Then he drew out his pocket-book and placed it carefully between its leaves, saying, in a half-reproachful tone: "Well, Minnie, if that rose-bud had half the value for you that this violet now has for me, there is no danger that it would be lost."

542

Colonel Eaton was now approaching, and Minnie, without speaking, hurriedly drew from her neck a gold locket, and, with the sweetest smile and a conscious blush, held it up to De Forest's eyes. It contained a miniature of Walter, and across the miniature lay the pressed rose-bud. Delighted, De Forest exclaimed:

"Oh, thank you, Minnie; thank you, from my inmost heart."

"Come, Miss Minnie; you are forgetting my cattle," said Colonel Eaton.

"Oh, no, Colonel; I assure you I could not do that; for handsome cattle always interest me very much."

As Minnie said this, she took the Colonel's arm. She seemed now in the most joyous spirits. Laughing and talking, she delighted the Colonel by asking him all sorts of questions about the cattle, and appeared deeply interested in everything relating to them. De Forest walked on with them, but seemed lost in his own thoughts, while his eyes were constantly on Minnie, and, undoubtedly, his day-dreams of orange-blossoms and white dresses had again taken possession of his mind, if one could judge from the happy expression of his countenance. Minnie's eyes would now and then meet his, notwithstanding that she seemed to be entirely engrossed in admiration of

Colonel Eaton's Kentucky heifers. When they reached home, they found Mrs. Eaton and Fannie in the little sitting-room, who inquired how they had enjoyed themselves.

“Oh,” said Minnie, “we had a delightful walk.”

“Oh, yes,” said Colonel Eaton; “of course Mr. De Forest had a most charming time; for I behaved myself well and kept out of the way, you know, for a long time.”

Here Minnie blushed, and exclaimed:

“Oh, Colonel, you are too bad. The walk would have been nothing if you had not been there to tell us all about those handsome Kentucky cattle of yours; would it, James?” she continued, turning to De Forest.

“Cattle, Minnie?” said James. “Why, did the Colonel show us cattle?”

Now all laughed, including De Forest, and Minnie dashed upstairs to see Walter.

The next day Walter was much improved; but it was some days before he could leave his room, and he did not find it hard to prevail on De Forest to defer his departure until then. These 543 were days of unalloyed happiness to De Forest; for, although Minnie invariably avoided all private tête-à-têtes with him, yet her manner towards him was invariably kind, and when in his company she seemed always joyous and happy.

The first day Walter found himself able to leave his room, James De Forest bid them all farewell, promising to visit them again as soon as his business would permit. He parted with the Eatons as if they had been old friends. To Fannie he whispered:

“In your hands I leave my friend Walter; take care of him, Miss Fannie.”

Fannie blushed, and was going to reply; but De Forest was gone.

Walter and Minnie remained four days more with their kind friends, and then they also took their leave. After a very pleasant trip to Minnie, they arrived safe in Walter's place of business in High Canyon. Mr. Hilton had a nice room prepared for Minnie, and had also procured the services of a widow who had, a few months before, lost her husband by a painful accident, while mining in that neighborhood. This lady was a Mrs. Swan, who proved to be a well-educated and sensible person, and an efficient assistant to Minnie, as well as a pleasant companion. So, dismissing the Chinaman, Minnie took full charge of the housekeeping, and was delighted with her new position.

Soon everything around the little cottage began to wear a new appearance, delightful to both Walter and Mr. Hilton. Fannie Eaton sent Minnie plants and cuttings from her own garden and from Smith's extensive gardens near the city of Sacramento. In two or three months, flowers bloomed for her, and the wild rose-bushes and other beautiful climbers she had planted around the cottage began to cover it over and make it look most charming. Minnie's wildest dreams of the pleasures of a mountain miner's life with Walter seemed now fulfilled. She reigned queen in that whole mining district. A smile won from her was more valued by many a young miner than a lucky day's work in the richest claim. While she was pleasant, cheerful and affable to all, without the least formality or affectation, she ever preserved that quiet dignity of manner that gives such a peculiar charm to the educated American girl. Her keen discernment recognized merit and worth in the persons introduced to her, as quickly in the rough garb of the practical miner as when 544 presented in a suit of the finest broadcloth. It is not surprising, then, that Minnie's popularity and power knew no limits in High Canyon and its neighborhood. At that time, in California, every revolver in the whole country was held by its owner at the command of the good and the virtuous pioneer women; for they were, in fact, half-worshipped, while those of the unfortunate class, as a rule, fell lower and became more degraded in California than perhaps in any other place in the world.

Minnie wrote long letters to her mother, giving her a description of her mountain life, which showed her to be fully happy. Oh! it cannot be that her young, light heart, while now so joyous and full of wild happiness, is never warned nor visited by a presentiment of coming evil; or is there something that whispers to her when the sky of the future looks the clearest and the sun of to-day

the brightest: “Minnie, be careful, prepare; for a storm is gathering for you to meet that will test your womanhood to its very center?” Oh, yes; when we see her suddenly stop the gay song that ever cheers her in her daily duties, and look thoughtful and anxious, surely it must be that she has heard the warning whisper; because now her eyes are turned to the heavens above her, and that prayer of prayers taught by God Himself comes in low, sweet accents from her lips. Then courage seems to throw light at her feet, and with confidence she treads her way, while her joyous song is again resumed, and echoes and re-echoes from rock to rock, each vibration and new echo, like a joy of the past, growing sweeter and sweeter as it dies away in the distance.

545

CHAPTER XV.

PREPARING FOR SEA—CAPTAIN WARD AND BROWN.

When Captain Ward reached San Francisco, he found his gang a good deal demoralized by his absence. Many of them refused to attend the meetings of the gang, and carried on their depredations on the community on their individual responsibility and profit. Many had gone to the mines, where good opportunities always offered for stealing gold-dust. Scarcely a day passed that did not bring us accounts from some mining district of the summary execution of a thief, or of a murderer and a thief both. This prompt action soon began to turn back the thieves to San Francisco. Ward saw his position, and understood that his time was short to complete his preparations and carry out his plans. So, after a consultation with Brown and Jack Lawson, he commenced to select his crew for the Blue Bell, provision her for a long voyage, and put her in fighting trim in every respect. All this he did in a quiet way, using his own men, of course, to take the supplies to the bark, and no one seemed to observe him, or care to inquire into his business. Every one in those days was so intent on his own business or speculations that he paid but little attention to what his neighbor was doing. Brown alone understood the part of his plan that related to Minnie, and, disliking it very much, he made one more effort to dissuade Ward from it; but he found him more determined than ever.

“I tell you, Brown,” he said, “there is no use in your mentioning the matter to me. I loved that girl before I saw her. Now that I have seen her, I love her ten times more. Yes; I love her with fiercest passion, and yet I hate her with the most deadly hate. I cannot account for this myself, yet it is true. My fate is linked with her in some way, and when I am near her I see that she knows it; for she shudders when I speak to her, and she never returns me a smile. No; her eyes look almost defiant when I strive to draw one from her. Oh, yes; I both love and 546 hate her; and she shall be my wife and slave, or I will perish in the attempt!”

“Well, have your own way, then; but I have apprehensions in regard to the Lawsons. I see old Jack is delighted with your attention to Lizzie, and thinks you will surely marry her. When we were taking goods on board the bark the other day, I was surprised to see on board the lighter, one of those beautiful ladies' Chinese work-tables. I asked him what in the world he bought it for. ‘That,’ said he, with a grim smile, ‘is for the Captain's wife. I will present it to her as the Blue Bell passes out to sea.’”

As Brown told this circumstance, Ward's face grew dark and serious. Then he said in a bitter, contemptuous tone:

“The old rascal fairly loves me, and, if he behaves himself, I will do well for this girl of his; but he must not put on any airs with me, or he will find his mistake; that is all.”

“Well,” said Brown, “how about De Forest? He may be in your way far worse than Jack Lawson; for, if he undertakes to hunt up your history, San Francisco might become a little too warm a place for any of us gentlemen to reside in.”

“Yes,” said Ward, with a laugh; “other places might be more healthy for us; so I intend to save my friend De Forest all the trouble of making such useless inquiries as to my past history.”

“Well, I thought you were to have attended to that matter long ago, Captain?”

“Yes; the day I left Colonel Eaton's my intention was that he should never go back to Oregon; but, you see, he hung around Colonel Eaton's four days longer than he said he would, and in that way slipped through the city when ‘Seagull Tim,’ who had taken the job, was not expecting him. When I found this had happened, I thought at first I would send Tim after him to Oregon; but, on reflection, I thought there would be too much risk in that way of doing up the business, so I determined to wait until he came to California again, which he surely will do, from what Walter Wagner writes me. Then the job can be done under my own supervision, and there will be no risk or slip-up about it.”

“I think you are right, Captain,” said Brown; “for the least mistake might be fatal to us all.”

“That is my view exactly, Brown; and, although I would like my little sweetheart to be thinking as soon as possible of the 547 fellow, whenever she does think of him, as in his last box, yet prudence forbids me to be in too great haste.”

“What did Wagner say in his letter, Captain?”

“Oh, he is coming to it all right.”

And, as Ward spoke, he took out of his pocket-book a letter, saying: “Here; I will read you the last part of it. He addresses me. ‘My very dear friend Ward,’ and runs on to say:

I delayed answering your last letter until I had fully made up my mind in regard to your very liberal proposition. I can now say that, on mature deliberation, I have come to the conclusion to accept your offer, if we agree on minor details of the arrangement, of which I have but little doubt. I find it will be impossible for me to sever my connection with Mr. Hilton before the tenth of May, next. How will this suit Mr. Brown? Please see him, and let me know if he can wait so long. If he can, I will go down to the Bay in the first part of February; then we can come to a complete understanding. My sister is well, and thanks you for your message. When I visit San Francisco, she will be with me as far as Colonel Eaton's, to whom she is anxious to pay a visit.

“So you see, Brown, all goes right, so far, with this confiding young gentleman. I forgot to tell you that I had a long talk with Sam Brannan, whose acquaintance I have been cultivating. It would make you laugh to hear him, he is so fierce on thieves. One would suppose Sam was a saint himself, and that he never had anything to do with gobbling up city property. He and some others are determined to organize a vigilance committee, to hunt out the Sydney thieves. I agreed with him, of course; and told him to put my name down for two hundred dollars, to help.”

“Well, Captain, that may make things hot for us here yet; but what would poor Sam do if this vigilance committee, as soon as they got through hanging and banishing the small thieves, should take the bit in their mouth, and just turn around on the big thieves? The hypocritical villains, who are a sort of legal robbers, as you may say; that nice little gang of delectable spirits, who, sitting in council as the city fathers, the guardians of the people, contrived, by cunningly-devised ordinances, to transfer the city money, by a hundred thousand at a blow, into their own pockets, and for their own aggrandizement despoil the city of her inheritance of real estate. Yes; where, then, would be many of the fellows, now calling for a vigilance committee, if that was to happen?”

“In that respect you are right, Brown; but that will not help 548 us, you know. In fact, it will make it worse; for these fellows raise the cry upon us to cover up their own work, and they will push it with zeal, you may be sure. So we have no time to lose in getting our fellows together, and making our final move.”

“Well, Captain, if you were not fascinated by this Yankee girl, we could be off in a week.”

“What is the use, Brown, in talking to me in that way? My destiny, I tell you, is no ordinary one. As a wolf, I have planned and led on to murder and robbery on a small scale, and hunted down such small game as Lizzie Lawson in matters of love. But now, as a lion, I will take the broad ocean as my field, where I will plunder and murder as monarchs do. I will stand out boldly, with my bloody dagger in my hand, and call on all who dare to come and take me. And who will have the impudence to compare me with those low, mean, sneaking thieves who obtain seats in city councils and in legislative halls, by hypocritical and lying pretences, for no other purpose than to enrich

themselves and their confederates by betraying every trust reposed in them? These fellows profess honesty, and even talk and make speeches about religion and God, while living and acting just as much in defiance of all laws, either human or divine, as I do. They add hypocrisy to their villainy. I do not; and surely a girl of the noble stamp of Minnie Wagner, if compelled to choose between me and one of those sneaking thieves, would prefer the bold, acknowledged outlaw.”

“Yes, Captain; I believe if compelled, as you say, she would take the bold villain before the sneaking thief. But the next question is, who is to compel Miss Minnie Wagner to choose the one or the other? I am satisfied that her clear judgment will enable her to avoid both; and I tell you that you are mistaken if you fancy that her brother will ever attempt to control her, for the fellow fairly worships the girl.”

“No, Brown; I do not expect him to control her; and I tell you that I expect to put him in a position where disgrace will stare him in the face, and then I will go to Minnie myself, and I will offer to save him, if she will take me for her husband. Then my game is made; for she will sacrifice herself to save him.”

“Well, Captain, if you can get him in that position, it will undoubtedly give you an immense power over him; but how you are to do that I cannot understand; for I can see that he is as watchful of his honor, in all respects, as a miser is of his gold.”

“I know all that, Brown; but you shall see when the time comes. You have nothing in you but the wolf, and he is naturally cowardly, and no match for the wolf and the lion together, you know.”

“Well, well, Captain; I don't care to have those sort of compliments; and, if I was inclined to pay them back, I would just tell you that sometimes it comes into my head that you are the child of the arch-fiend himself. Your appetite for villainy seems so exquisite, and you never seem to suffer from remorse; while I sometimes have turns in which I taste hell itself!”

Here Ward laughed, as he said:

“Oh, you do? Well, you may as well be getting used to it, old fellow, for that is where you are to go, sure. No; as you say, I never have such turns while I am awake; but, what is strange, they do come to me sometimes lately in my dreams.”

“Is that so, Captain? Why, you surprise me! I did not suppose that, either asleep or awake, you ever knew such a feeling as fear of the future.”

“No, Brown; I am not afraid of it; but, as I said, I have lately had strange visions in my dreams. Now, last night, for instance, I had a vision of hell, and I thought all the people I had ever helped out of the world were trying to drag me into it, and that I resisted them all, until, at last, I was astonished to see Lizzie Lawson come to drag me like the rest. I thought she gave out a terrible, frightful laugh as she took hold of me, and that I had no power to resist her. So, into the yawning chasm of molten fire she flung me, and, as I was tumbling in, I heard my mother's shriek as plainly as I used to do, when my father kicked and beat her. It was that shriek that awoke me. I was not long in finding that it was a dream, and I laughed at its absurdity. That was the only effect it had on me.”

While Ward related his vision or dream, Brown's eyes were fixed on him with a frightened expression. Then he said, in a loud voice:

“How strange that was about Lizzie Lawson! Have you and she had any difficulty?”

“Difficulty! Of course not. She fairly fawns at my feet.” Here Ward gave chuckling laugh, as he continued: “Why, she fancies herself my wife, already. I had to persuade her to that.”

550

“Does old Jack know how matters stand between you and Lizzie, Captain?”

“No, no; I think she may have told him that I had promised to marry her; that is all.”

“Well, and how in the mischief are you to manage him when you throw her off? That is what I don't understand.”

“I told you before, Brown, that what looks full of difficulty to you, is an easy matter to me. I have this girl now in my power, so that I can make her lie and deceive her father and brothers in any way I like; and I will not undeceive her, as regards her relations with me, until the last moment. No; I will say nothing until I have Jack and his boys safe at sea, when they will be in my power, and will not dare to whimper. Yes; I can see my way clearly in the whole little game I have before me. So just do as I tell you, Brown, and all will come out right.”

“Well, Captain, if anything goes wrong, it will not be my fault.”

CHAPTER XVI.

CONFESSION OF LOVE—CAPTAIN WARD'S ARRIVAL.

It was on the 19th of February, 1851, soon after the conversation related in the last chapter, between Ward and Brown, that the memorable attack was made on the store of C. J. Janson & Co., in which the robbers got two thousand dollars, and left Mr. Janson for dead on the floor of his store. This was the most audacious robbery that had yet taken place, and it fired the whole people with indignation. They rose en masse, as it were, to hunt out the robbers. Two men were arrested on suspicion, and gave their names as Burdue and Windred. Mr. Janson thought he recognized these men as the parties who had robbed the store and attacked himself in such a murderous way. A public meeting was called to devise some means to put a stop to this thieving and robbery, or, at least, to check it, if possible. In all these movements, Sam Brannan and William T. Coleman took a leading part, and, unfortunately, were too radical in their views. Brannan did not command much personal respect; but Coleman was then, as he has always been since, universally respected, and he had, therefore, great influence with the conservative part of the community. He now joined Sam Brannan in urging the people to forthwith hang Burdue and Windred. Brannan made furious speeches, which were applauded by unthinking people. Not satisfied with this, Brannan had printed slips circulated among

the excited crowd, urging the immediate lynch-law execution of the prisoners. And to these he affixed Coleman's name with his own, though it was generally believed at the time that William T. Coleman never authorized him to do so. Be this as it may, it was fortunate these efforts did not succeed, for the prisoners were soon afterwards proven, to the satisfaction of all, not to have been the men who committed the crime. This blunder checked the Vigilance Committee movement for the next three months, but it gave Ward and his gang a warning which lessened their 552 depredations very much. During all this excitement, Ward was one of the loudest and noisiest in urging the summary execution of Burdue and Windred, whom he, of course, knew to be innocent. This zeal served to give him a good position with the leading spirits of the Vigilance Committee that sprang into such active life the following June. Thus matters were going on, when, late in February, Walter came to the city, and completed his arrangements for entering into business with Brown. Walter was to put into the partnership five thousand dollars, and Brown fifteen thousand, and they were to be equal partners in all respects; but Brown was to have the right to withdraw ten thousand dollars of his capital at the expiration of the first year. The very day Walter signed these articles of partnership with Brown, James De Forest arrived from Oregon. Walter had written to him all about his intention of making this move, and so strong was De Forest's feeling against it that he made an excuse of business to come to San Francisco, in hopes of getting an opportunity to dissuade Walter from taking the step. He was too late, however; for the papers were all executed and exchanged before he met Walter. Ward was again forced to put off his intention in regard to De Forest, on account of the great excitement over the arrest of Burdue and Windred, then only just subsiding. De Forest took a trip with Walter as far as Colonel Eaton's to see Minnie, who was there on a visit to Fannie. Minnie received him in the same free, joyous way she had always done. A dozen times during this visit, De Forest made up his mind to make a formal proposal to Minnie; but in some unaccountable way she avoided giving him the opportunity. Then the third day came, which was the utmost limit he could give his stay. So, reluctantly, he was about to leave her, without coming to a full understanding. However, as he wished her good-bye, he whispered:

“Will you not walk as far as the outside gate with me?”

With a blush, and a little tremor in her voice, she said:

“Oh, yes; certainly; with pleasure.”

As they now walked along the lane that led from the flower-garden gate to the outside main entrance, Minnie's head leant forward, and her sunshade hid her face. De Forest gently raised her arm, and placed it within his own.

“Minnie,” he began, in a low voice, “I was determined not to go away without having had a full talk with you; but somehow you appear to have defrauded me out of an opportunity of doing so.”

“Well, if I did prevent you from saying all you want to say to me, James, come back as soon as Walter is nicely started in business in San Francisco, and I will listen to all you want to say to me; and we will try to agree, you know, if possible.”

“But why could we not have had the talk this time, Minnie? But perhaps you prefer to wait to see if you may not find some one with whom you would like to talk better than you do with me.”

Minnie at once raised her eyes up to De Forest's face with a reproachful, almost sad look, and said:

“And is that the way you think of me, James?”

“No, no, Minnie; it is not the way I think of you; I did not mean it. I know you too well for that; and, Minnie, I tell you now what I never told you in plain words before.” As he spoke he clasped the hand holding his arm with his disengaged one, and, putting his head down close to hers, said: “I love you with all my inmost life; I love you so that your happiness is a thousand times dearer to me than my own; I long, I yearn for your love in return; and yet, if you could be happier by giving that love to any one else, I would want you to do so. If I saw a dark cloud or a shadow on my path, I would never ask you to step beneath it with me; but when I look forward to the future, Minnie, and think of you as by my side in the journey through life, I can see no cloud or shadow, no tarnished name, no ease, no luxury, bought by dishonor, or a breach of confidence reposed either

by the people at large or by an individual. No; I can see no such cloud. I have been fortunate in business, thank God for it, and what I wanted in seeking a conversation with you was to offer to share all I have on earth with you, Minnie, and to pledge to you the devotion of a life in guarding your happiness.”

Minnie, without seeking to withdraw her hand, raised her eyes with steadfast countenance to James' face, as she said, in a voice full of deep feeling:

“James, if the freaks of fortune had thrown a shadow or a cloud on your path, something here,” laying her hand on her heart, “tells me that I would fly to your side to strive to clear it away, or by standing beneath it with you to make it easier for you to endure. Yes; if you came to ask me to share with you a rugged, stormy journey through life, which it was your fate to 554 encounter, I will acknowledge to you that, with Walter's consent, you would never have to ask a second time. But, James, you have now nothing but diamonds, luxury and sunshine to offer me to share, so I can, at least, ask you to defer this proposition until you come to us in San Francisco, when I hope you may find dear Walter well settled in business, and independent of all I could do for him. Then you shall sit down near me and make out the best excuse you can for your blindness and want of judgment, you know, in making me the offer you did to-day, which I was so considerate, you know, as not to accept, until you had time to recover your senses and see your mistake.”

“Well, Minnie, you make me happy and miserable both by what you say. Yes; and almost make we wish that I had some dark cloud lowering over my future; for then your generous heart would compel you, as you acknowledge, to step beneath it with me. But, no, Minnie; I am not so selfish as that. I will try to be as generous as you are, and be satisfied to wait until I come down in May next for my final answer. And, now, before parting, Minnie, let me say one word of this man Ward. I want to tell you that I have the strongest, overpowering dislike to him.”

As De Forest said this, Minnie involuntarily drew close to him, and he felt a shudder shake her arm as it rested on his.

“Ah! you have the same feeling, I see, Minnie?”

“Yes, James; I acknowledge I have at times a strange foreboding about him. Perhaps it is because Mr. Hilton thinks so badly of him; but, you can depend on it, I will be on my guard. And, now that you have spoken of it, I will tell you that it is an undefined fear of this man that makes me so determined not to leave Walter, or even think of anything that relates to myself, until Ward proves himself to be all he says he is; or until we find his true past history, about which Mr. Hilton insists there is a mystery.”

“Well, now that I see you are on your guard, and that I know Isaac Hilton has his eyes open, I will be much easier. So, good-bye, Minnie, and may God bless you and guard you both; and pray for me!”

As he said the last words, he stooped, and before Minnie knew it he had kissed her cheek, and found it wet with tears.

“Good-bye, James,” she said, looking up with a smile; “and do not go away thinking I am unhappy; for I am truly very happy, even if there is, in my imagination, a cloud on Walter's path, that must be cleared away.”

555

“Again good-bye, Minnie,” said De Forest, as he leaped on his horse; and, as both now looked towards the outer gate, there stood Ward leaning over it, with his large, dark eyes full on them. It was as much as Minnie could do to suppress a scream. She did, however, command herself in time, and bowed to Ward in recognition of his presence. Ward had evidently just arrived from Sacramento, and had alighted from his horse to open the gate. As De Forest approached, Ward threw the gate open, saying:

“How are you, De Forest? I am so glad to see you. Forgive me, my dear fellow, for intruding on you at such a moment; but I had just reached the gate as you and Miss Minnie came in sight, and,

as I saw your conversation was peculiarly interesting to you both, I forbore passing until you got through.”

“You were most considerate, Captain,” said De Forest, in a most sarcastic tone; “but I regret your stopping one moment, for your presence would not have made the least difference to me, one way or the other, I assure you; and it would have saved you a painful watch. Good afternoon, Captain!”

As De Forest spoke, he drove his long California spurs into his horse's flanks, and was out of hearing before Ward could reply. As he dashed on his road, he murmured to himself:

“I feel easy, now that I know she is on her guard. What a noble, generous, dear girl she is! Well, she's as good as acknowledged that she loved me; so I am sure of that, anyway. May is a long way off, yet it will be here soon, after all; and then I will be, as she said, sitting near her, and then—and then—oh, how happy I shall be!”

When De Forest rode off, Ward walked on through the gate, and soon overtook Minnie.

“Miss Minnie,” said he, “I was just apologizing to our friend De Forest for having come so inopportunistically, to disturb that little tête-à-tête between you and him; but he received my apology, I must say, most ungraciously, Miss Minnie. Have I ever acted towards you in any manner unbecoming a gentleman and a man of honor?”

“Most certainly not, Captain.”

“Well, then, Miss Minnie, all I ask is to be treated by your friends as a gentleman should be treated.”

“Most certainly, Captain. Whenever I have influence, you shall be treated in no other way.”

556

“Have you no influence with De Forest, Miss Minnie? I had an idea that the poor fellow was your slave.”

“You are mistaken Captain. There is no relation between Mr. De Forest and myself, that would authorize me to remark on his conduct towards any one.”

“No? Well, then, Miss Minnie, permit me to say that he takes liberties I would not dare to take.”

Minnie felt her cheeks burn; but, preserving her calm voice, said:

“Mr. De Forest and myself were brought up from childhood together, and we regard each other as almost brother and sister. So I am not disposed to quarrel with him because he sometimes seems to forget that we are no longer children, and that, in fact, we are not brother and sister.”

Ward remained silent for a moment as he walked on by Minnie's side, leading his horse. Then he said:

“Miss Minnie, will you honor me by taking my arm?”

Minnie knew that Ward had seen her leaning on De Forest's arm, and, from what he said, saw De Forest kiss her cheek. She wanted to decline taking his arm, but her doing that would give a marked significance to her free, off-hand treatment of De Forest, which she wished to avoid just now. So, without any hesitation that was perceptible to Ward, she took his arm until she reached the flower-garden gate, when she made an excuse of picking some flowers, which she was now, apparently, very busy in arranging in a bouquet. Ward was evidently satisfied with Minnie's behavior to him, and selected some flowers for her, which she placed among the others, saying something complimentary to his taste.

“Thank you, Miss Minnie,” he said; “you do not know what a pleasure it is for me to think that flowers I have selected have a place with those gathered by yourself.”

Walter's approach at that moment relieved Minnie from the necessity of an answer.

“Good morning, Captain,” said Walter, walking over and cordially shaking hands; “I am so glad to see you, as we are about to start back to Downieville early to-morrow morning, and I wanted to

say a few words to you or to Brown on business which I had forgotten when I was in San Francisco, and of which I could speak better than I could write.”

“Well, Wagner, that is all right; but I will be candid with you, and tell you that it was not to see you that I came. I could 557 not think of letting Miss Minnie return to Downieville without seeing her.”

Minnie bowed, and made a good effort at a smile.

“That is all right, Captain; you are always so gallant that you could not say less; but business must be attended to. So, sister Minnie, please excuse us, and we will soon be in.”

Minnie was but too glad to excuse them; so, as Walter took the Captain's arm and walked off with him, she dashed into the house, and in a moment more was alone in her room. She closed the door, and walked quickly across to the open window, and threw the bouquet as far as she could into a field of tall wheat. As she did so, she said, in a low voice:

“Some of you sweet flowers were innocent, but bad company has made you all intolerable to me.”

Then she went to her wash-stand, and, while seemingly absorbed in thought, she poured out some water and carefully washed her hands, saying while she did so:

“How foolish I am to have such a terrible dislike to that man; but I cannot control my feelings. I did not feel easy until I had thrown those flowers away and washed my hands. I must try, however, to get over it, for he is so attached to Walter.”

Minnie now threw herself into an easy chair, and seemed lost in thought. Then she said, half-aloud:

“Poor James! How lonesome he looked when he was going away, all alone, for such a long journey up there to Oregon! I could not help shedding tears at the thought of it. He found that out when he kissed my cheek, and it made him feel worse, I fear; but I told him I was happy, and so I was, and am now. I did not know I loved him in the way he wishes me to love him. I knew I loved him as I loved Walter; but when he told me to-day how he wanted me to love him, it made me feel

so strange, and, oh, so happy, that it must be that I love him as he wants me to love him. How generous he was to give up urging me when I spoke of Walter! Well, he will come back in May, and I have promised to let him then sit near me and say all he wishes to say. This is February. March, April, May. Three months! That seems a long time; but I suppose it will not be long in passing, after all.”

Then she paused, and then drew from her neck the locket containing Walter's miniature and James' rose-bud. She smiled as she looked at them, pressed the locket to her lips and replaced it.

558

At that moment Fannie opened the door, saying:

“May I come in?”

“Oh, yes, dear Fannie; come in.”

“Do you know, Minnie, that Captain Ward is here?”

“Oh, yes; I have had a talk with him, and I will be ever so much obliged to you, dear Fannie, if you will entertain him; and if he asks for me, just say that I have lain down, as I do not feel very well to-day; for such, in fact, is the case. I was just about to lie on the sofa here when you opened the door.”

As Minnie spoke she wrapped a shawl around her, and cuddled up comfortably on the sofa. Fannie smiled archly, and said:

“Minnie, would you feel too badly to go down if it was James De Forest who had to be entertained?”

Minnie blushed, and half-laughed, as she said:

“Fannie, you are too bad; but if it was James De Forest and Walter who had to be entertained, perhaps neither of us would have to coax the other much to undertake the task.”

Now Fannie blushed scarlet, while Minnie's eyes lit up with triumphant fun, as she exclaimed:

“There; I am even!”

Fannie stooped over her, and whispered:

“Minnie, you are a good-for-nothing, mischievous, wicked girl; that is all I have to say.” And she started out of the room, while Minnie laughed heartily.

Ward found himself compelled to take the excuse Fannie gave for Minnie's non-appearance, and after lunch took his departure, leaving highly complimentary messages for Minnie. As he rode slowly towards Sacramento, he said:

“Well, I caught them nicely; but she turned it off well, and, in fact, it may be, as she says, that there is nothing between them, after all; for his manner to her is more like that of a brother than a lover. Oh, he can not love her, anyway, as I do; for she haunts me like a phantom day and night. What a wild, maddening feeling I had while her arm was in mine. Oh, how near it brought me to acting the madman! But her taking her arm away just at the time she did, saved us both; and one thing I have decided on: I cannot have this fellow De Forest playing around her any longer. No; I will put Seagull Tim on his track as he goes back to Oregon. He always makes sure work of such jobs, and I will trust him this time, let the consequences be what they may.”

CHAPTER XVII.

ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION—A CONSULTATION.

About three days after Walter and Minnie had returned to High Canyon, Walter received a letter from Captain Ward, in which was inclosed a slip cut from the Portland, Oregon, local newspaper. In reference to this inclosure, Ward said:

“You will see by the slip I inclose you that our mutual friend De Forest has had a truly wonderful escape from the hands of an assassin. How glad I am that the fellow paid with his life for his

cowardly assault! We are in a quiet way doing all we can to ferret out who this fellow Lusk can be, that the dying rascal said had instigated him to the horrid crime. I think I know him, and, if I am right, he is now captain of a schooner which will be back in port in two or three months.”

Walter, in the greatest excitement, called Minnie, and said:

“You must not be frightened, Minnie, when I tell you that James De Forest has had an escape from death. He is, however, well, and perfectly safe—thank God! Our friend, Captain Ward, sends us the account. Here it is, in a slip cut from an Oregon paper.”

So Walter read the following aloud, while Minnie sat on the sofa, trembling and pale:

In the matter of the inquest held to-day on the body of Timothy Dutton, alias “Seagull Tim,” Mr. James De Forest, being sworn, said to the Coroner's jury: After we were a day at sea, on my last trip from San Francisco, I observed, as I thought, a man watching all my movements, particularly when I was alone, which annoyed me very much, as I was somewhat inclined to be alone on this trip home. One evening I walked forward, and, as I thought, unobserved by any one, I climbed up and sat upon a furled sail upon the bowsprit, and was lost in thought, with my eyes on the breaking, foaming waves our bark was dashing through. After a few minutes, I was startled from my reverie by a noise as of a fall behind me; I turned quickly, and, throwing my eyes over the sail I was seated on, I saw the deceased here just jumping up from the deck, where he had evidently fallen from somewhere near my position. I drew my revolver in an instant, and leaped on the deck beside him. He looked at me in apparent surprise, saying:

560

“Oh, I did not know there was any one up there.”

“I don't know whether to believe you or not; but I am satisfied that you have your eyes a little too much on me to be comfortable. Now, once for all, I warn you that if I catch you following me in any way, on this ship or when we get to Oregon, I will blow the top of your head off as sure as you

are a Sydney duck; for I know where you come from by the cut of your jib.” The fellow said, in a sullen way, as he walked off:

“I meant no harm, and I did not know you were there.”

After that the fellow kept out of my way for the rest of the voyage. On arriving in Portland, after I took supper at the hotel here, I went to the store of Dunne & Co., and remained there until half-past ten o'clock writing letters. On my way back to the hotel, I thought I observed a man following me; so, drawing my revolver, I stopped right up to wait for him; but, whoever he was, as soon as he saw I had stopped he turned down another street, and I saw no more of him. On reaching the hotel, the landlord showed me my room. There were two beds in it, and the landlord requested me to leave the door unlocked, as he expected a gentleman to come in during the night, to whom he would be obliged to give the other bed. I said all right. But this fact, and a sort of disagreeable impression remaining on my mind in regard to being followed in the street, made me cautious, and I examined my revolver and laid it and my bowie-knife carefully under my pillow. I slept, but not soundly or quietly, and, as I lay half-asleep, about two o'clock in the night, I thought I heard footsteps on the stairway. I at first supposed it was the person who was to occupy the other bed; but, as I listened, I became aware that it must be some one stealing their way cautiously. So I reached to my revolver, cocked it, and let my hand rest on it under the pillow. The door was now slowly opened, and then I could discern the figure of a man approaching my bed. My first impulse was to raise my revolver and order him to throw up his hands; but I thought the fellow was coming to rob my clothes, so I determined to wait until he was in the act of rifling my pockets. He was now close to me, and stooped, as I thought, to take up my pantaloons that lay on the chair close to my bed; but, instead of that, he threw himself forward, with a quick, still movement, and made a desperate blow at me with something in his right hand. The blow was so sudden and unexpected that I had no time to move; but, somehow, I shrank back, perhaps two inches, before the blow fell, and it was well I did, for I felt the cold blade of the bowie-knife pass close to my collar-bone and throat as it was driven into the bed. In an instant my revolver was up, and I fired, breaking the robber's right arm, as I afterwards found. The fellow dropped the knife, swore a terrible oath and fled. I leaped after him, but it was so dark on the stairway that I could not see to fire again. I called loudly to the landlord to

intercept the robber. The landlord, as he will tell you, gentlemen of the jury, heard me, leaped out of his bed, and snatched up his shot-gun just in time to give the fellow its contents as he was escaping out the door.

He fell, and we picked him up, and, bringing him in, he proved to be the man who had annoyed me so much on the passage from San Francisco. 561 He was in a dying condition, and spoke in a wild, often incoherent way. We saw life was fast ebbing away, but, notwithstanding this, the landlord sent for a doctor. I asked the fellow his name. He said, in a faint voice, "Timothy Dutton; but they call me Seagull Tim." "What did you want to kill me for?" said I. He answered, in a half-suffocated voice, with his eyes shut: "Oh, it was a cold sort of a job; I did not like it. I did not want it; but the Captain said he wanted you out of the way, and told me he would give me a thousand dollars for the job, and all my expenses, and I undertook it; not so much for the pay as that I wanted to please the Captain. I did him a good turn once before; for it was I, and he will tell you so, who brought down Captain Jackson, by thrusting my knife in his back when they had their big last fight, that made him our Captain." Here the wretch seemed to die away altogether; but with a considerable effort he again aroused himself, and said, "Tell the Captain I was true to him to the last," "Yes," said I, "I will tell him. What is his name?" "His name, his name," repeated the dying man, seeming to try to collect his scattered senses; "yes, his right name is Captain Lusk, but, but we here in California call—yes, in California—call him—yes, we call him—" The wretch said no more, for he was dead; and so the doctor found him when he arrived.

As Walter read the last words Minnie, without speaking, arose and went into her room. She closed the door and dropped on her knees beside her bed, and, with her face buried in her hands, gave way to her feelings in a burst of thankfulness to God for His wonderful protection of him she so dearly loved. Her words of praise and thankfulness were accompanied by a flood of tears she could not hold back. They were tears of gratitude to God and of sympathy for the danger James De Forest had passed through.

When Isaac Hilton read the account of the attack on De Forest, he remained in thought for a long time. Then he said to Mrs. Swan:

“I have an idea who this Lusk is, that the robber spoke of; but I do not say a word, for, of course, I might be mistaken; and I hope I am mistaken, for Walter Wagner's sake.”

The next day Walter received a long letter from James De Forest himself, giving all the particulars of the attempt on his life, but at the same time making light of it. The only thing that disturbed him, he said, was to find that he had such a bitter enemy. He concluded the subject by saying:

A horrible suspicion as to who this man Lusk, who seeks my life, is, has forced itself on my imagination. When I go to the city in May, I will take some trouble to investigate the matter. I will do this in justice to the party I am forced to suspect. I will, therefore, mention no names now, particularly as I hope to find that I am totally in the wrong.

562

The last few words of the letter seemed to be addressed directly to Minnie, in this way:

Now, my dear Miss Minnie, pray on for me; for I cannot but believe that it was those prayers you promised me that saved me from the assassin's hand, and that makes life sweeter than ever to me; and I want you to consider it all at your service as a matter of right,

As Walter finished reading, he exclaimed: “Who can it be that De Forest suspects? I cannot imagine.”

Minnie gave a little start and a shudder, but said nothing.

The morning that the news of Seagull Tim's attempt on De Forest's life reached San Francisco, Ward was seated in his room, at the finest hotel in the city, the Oriental, quietly smoking his cigar, when Brown burst into his room in great excitement, closed the door, and said in almost a whisper:

“Seagull Tim made a mis-blow, and I fear our game is all up.”

“He did!” said Ward, as he turned deadly pale. “Well, I will sink him with a piece of lead fastened to his neck, in the middle of the bay when the dog gets back.”

“No, you will not; for he is dead.”

“Dead!” repeated Ward.

“Yes. Here, take this Portland paper and read the account for yourself.”

As Brown handed the paper, he pointed out the place where the account of the Coroner's inquest was given. While Ward read, he was more agitated than Brown had ever seen him. When he concluded, he growled out:

“Well, all is right. The miserable villain choked before he betrayed us. That is first-rate, anyway.”

Brown made no remark, and Ward arose and paced the floor in thought for some minutes. Then he said:

“You see, Brown, I am in luck after all; for, if that dog had lived half a second longer, we would now be in the hands of Sam Brannan and Wm. T. Coleman, and their merciful lambs, on our way, most likely, to ornament some impromptu gibbet, for the amusement of those Yankees. So, you see, as I say, luck is on our side, or it may be that the devil has too much business for us yet, to let us be caught. Oh, how glad I am that the fellow choked just as he did!”

“I was in hopes, Captain,” said Brown, in a dogged tone, “that this would show you the necessity of abandoning your 563 views about this Wagner girl. Everything, you know, is ready. We could be off in less than an hour, if you would only give the word. This San Francisco is a great place to be recognized in. Some one may arrive from Sydney who knew you there, or from your old home in England. It is a terrible risk to run, now that the name of Lusk is connected with a California or Oregon crime.”

“Pshaw! Brown; you are a child. I often told you so before. You are of the wolf breed, and cannot understand the boldness of the lion. I have told you three times before that I am, in truth, infatuated by this girl, and can no more draw myself off from pursuing her, no matter what the consequence may be, than I could subdue a storm at sea, that was rushing me on the rocks.”

“Well, Captain, I hope this passion of yours will not rush *us all* on the rocks; that is all.”

“Don't be a coward, Brown. I tell you that luck is on my side. See how nicely Tim choked just at the right moment.”

“I wish he had choked before he mentioned the name of Lusk,” said Brown.

“Yes; that would, of course, have been better, decidedly, as you say, Brown; but it is all right as it stands. Was not Wild choked just as he was going to point me out! One word more, and I would have been gone!” And here Ward chuckled in his peculiar way, as he continued: “Oh, the old villain! how his eyes leaped out towards me, as it were, when he saw me in the crowd; but his arms being pinioned saved me, and in a moment more he was swinging in fine style. Oh, yes; I managed that first-rate, and luck is on my side surely, Brown.”

“I forgot to tell you, Captain, that, at old Jack's request, I called to see his daughter Lizzie yesterday. I found her well, but very anxious to see you. She said you had not been there for some days, and told me that if I saw you to ask you to call. I believe, Captain, that she loves you better than she loves her life; and she is really very handsome, and, in truth, a really educated lady in her manners. She would go with you to the end of the earth; I could see that. How I do wish that you could be satisfied with her, and then we could take her on board and be off to sea!”

Ward stopped short in his walk up and down the room, and, turning to Brown, said, in a most angry tone:

564

“I tell you, Brown, that you must never again suggest my doing what I have so often told you it was impossible for me to do—that is, to give up Minnie Wagner. Since our last conversation on this subject, I have grown half mad in regard to her. I think of her all day, and dream of her all night. When I am near her now, I am a man like other men, it appears to me, and every tone of her voice reverberates through me. Yes; strange as it is, I love that girl to almost madness. When she put her arm on mine the other day, a strange feeling I never experienced before took possession of me. I could not say a word to her. I had a notion of dropping on my knees before her, and telling her how I loved her, and swearing fidelity to her; and then, if she discarded me, of killing her and myself both on the spot. Yes; if our walk had been ten yards longer, that is what would have happened; but we reached the garden-gate just in time to save me from the mad act. Then she took some flowers from me, and spoke so kindly to me that I was in a wild dream of love—yes, love—all the way back to San Francisco. No, Brown; my fate, as I often told you before, is linked to this girl in some mysterious way, and she shall marry me, or die by my hand; that is decided. If you admire that girl Lizzie so much, I will turn her over to you, and you are welcome to her. I want no more of her.”

“No, no, Captain; thank you! I want nothing to do with her. I prefer to die some other way than by old Jack's sheath-knife being drawn across my throat some bright morning.”

“Pshaw! Brown; his sort have no such feeling as you suppose. I will take my queen, my empress that is to be, on board the Blue Bell, right before the eyes of old Jack and his two sons, and you will see that they will cringe like wolf whelps before my look, and obey me like kicked dogs.”

“Well, Captain, a sort of luck does seem to be with you. So lead on, and I will not flinch.”

Ward did not speak for a few minutes, but continued his walk up and down the room in thought. At length, he said:

“Yes, Brown; all you have to do is to follow where I lead, and all will come out right. In the first place, I will have to see the principal men of the Vigilance Committee, and mislead them as to who this man Lusk is. I will pretend that I know him, and that he is now at sea in command of a

schooner, and you know we can 565 keep him at sea until we have left the harbor ourselves. I will also write to Wagner and De Forest, intimating that I am on Lusk's tracks.”

This ended the conference, and Ward carefully pursued the plan he had laid out, and was most successful in deceiving all who took an interest in the matter of the attempted murder. In a few days, as was always the case in California at that time, the whole circumstance of the attempted assassination of De Forest appeared forgotten.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ROBBERY—MINNIE'S ENCOURAGEMENT.

The terms of separation between Walter and Hilton were that Hilton was to take the store goods and all moneys due the firm in High Canyon, for which he was to pay Walter nine thousand dollars. Seven thousand of this was to be cash down, and one thousand in three months, without interest, and one thousand in four months, also without interest. The date of the dissolution of partnership was to be May 10th. These terms were satisfactory to both parties, although Hilton very much regretted Walter's withdrawal, and had done all he could to dissuade him from doing so. Since the date of Minnie's arrival in High Canyon, everything had been so bright and cheerful that Hilton looked forward to her leaving with the most lonesome feeling. Good Mrs. Swan, too, felt very much down-hearted at the prospect before her. She really loved Minnie, and found it very hard to part from her; and then she must of course lose a nice harbor she had found in her sorrowful widowhood. One day, as the 10th of May was very near in its approach, Mrs. Swan sat absorbed in sad thoughts of her peculiar position, and tears were flowing down her cheeks. She gazed out of the dining-room window in a vacant way. Isaac Hilton, happening to pass, looked up and saw the tears on the widow's face. He stopped, turned around, and walked towards the dining-room, saying to himself:

“Why, she looks as sad as I have felt all day myself. I will see what is the matter, for I respect and like her very much.”

Well, we will not follow the good Isaac in his mission of charity; for he might prefer to be alone. But certain it is, that a great improvement in the spirits of both Mrs. Swan and Mr. Hilton appeared that afternoon; so much so that Walter and Minnie remarked it. The explanation did not fully appear until the morning of Walter and Minnie's departure, when they were surprised to find that Mrs. Swan and Mr. Hilton were unusually fixed up, and were to accompany them as far as Downieville. They now began to see through the matter, and were not mistaken; for, on reaching Downieville, Walter and Minnie were invited to stand up as witnesses for their two friends. They accepted the invitation with great pleasure, and soon after took their leave of Mr. and Mrs. Hilton, who did not look a bit lonesome.

Walter had with him the seven thousand dollars in gold-dust, received in accordance with his agreement with Hilton. Five thousand of this was to be paid in as his share of the capital of the new firm of Wagner & Brown, and two thousand was to be used in furnishing the cottage he had rented in San Francisco. Brown had already bought the furniture and fitted up the cottage, and Walter was to pay the bills on reaching the city. Walter and Minnie arrived safely in the city. Brown and Ward met them at the wharf, as the boat arrived, about half-past nine in the evening. Captain Ward was all attention, and whispered to Walter:

“Give the packages of gold-dust to Brown, and he will put them in our safe at the Oriental Hotel, where we have some twenty thousand belonging to Brown and myself, which was paid to us this evening after banking hours. It will be perfectly safe, as Brown will stay in the room until I get there, and in the morning we will deposit the whole with Page, Bacon & Co.”

As a matter of course, Walter did not hesitate to hand over his two bags of gold-dust to his new partner. Then, taking Minnie's arm, Walter invited Ward to walk with them to the cottage. The cottage was situated between two sand-hills on Pine street, a little above Kearny street. Jane, the hired girl that Brown had procured for Minnie, had some supper all ready for them, and everything looked neat and in order. The furniture was very handsome, and Minnie felt quite happy in taking possession of her new home. Ward was less pressing in his attentions and compliments to Minnie than usual, and she thought that, perhaps from this very fact, he never looked to so much advantage

before. However, she did not feel easy in his company; so, making an excuse of fatigue from traveling, she retired almost immediately after their cup of tea. An hour later, when Ward had left, Walter knocked at his sister's door to wish her a good-night, and, receiving no answer, he gently opened the door and softly advanced, with the light in his hand, close to her bed. 568 He saw that she was apparently in a sound, sweet sleep. Her long hair was flung back loose over the pillow behind her; her face was turned towards him; her cheek rested in one hand, while the other arm lay at full length outside the clothes. Walter's heart swelled with admiration and brotherly pride as he said to himself: "God bless her!"

And now, my dear young readers, I fancy that you stand by Walter at that moment, and that you exclaim: "Sleep on, poor, dear Minnie; draw all the strength from that sweet sleep you can to invigorate your beautiful physical structure; for you will need it all. Yes, Minnie; dream of your childhood; your sweet mother; and in your dream sit again in her lap as you used to do. Throw your arms around her neck; lay your head on her noble bosom; listen again to her wise counsel and earnest teachings; and draw from it a new inspiration of faith and fortitude. Yes, Minnie; and in that dream drop again upon your knees, and ask a father's and a mother's blessing, as you did long ago; for, oh, Minnie, to-morrow's light will bring to your new home the first chilly blast of the storm that has been gathering and brewing over you. Yes; a storm so dark and terrible that at times you can see no path by which to escape; but your unwavering trust in God will fill your true woman's heart with courage and confidence, as it has in every difficulty; and, though dark the way before you, in the light of His law you will step forward with unfaltering tread, and His angels will guard your feet from every danger, and lead you through every difficulty."

When the brother and sister met the next morning, they were happy and cheerful. As breakfast was concluded, the bell rang, and, on Walter's going to the door, he found a message from Captain Ward, desiring his presence, as soon as it was possible, at the Oriental Hotel. In obedience to the summons, Walter took his hat and left immediately. As soon as Walter had gone, Minnie put on her walking-dress and hat, and, taking the hired girl with her, who was familiar with the way to Father Maginnis' church, near the Orphan Asylum, on Market street, they found the old man very busy

about the asylum. Minnie, without hesitation, opened her business to him, which was to take two seats in his church.

“Tut, tut! Could you not do that, as everybody else does it, on Saturday afternoon?”

569

“I did not know it made any difference, Father, on what day I came.”

“Difference! Of course it does. Don't you see how very busy I am?”

“Well, Father, I will come on Saturday, as you can not attend to it now,” said Minnie, rising to go, and feeling a little mortified at the manner of her reception.

“And come all the way here again in this deep sand and wind? What would you do that for?”

“Oh, as you are so busy, Father.”

“Well, I suppose you have business, too; for every one in California has business, and as much as they can do, too, without being bothered to make two journeys about one thing; so come with me.”

They entered the church by a side door. Everything looked calm, still and solemn in the little church. The Father turned towards the altar, dropped on his knees, and remained a minute with his head bowed down in prayer. Minnie slipped into an open pew, and followed his example. The Father arose, and beckoned her to draw near him, and in a whisper said, as he pointed to an open pew:

“How would you like your two seats in that pew?”

“Thank you; that will do nicely, Father;” and Minnie followed the priest out of the church. As soon as they were outside, she said: “Now, Father, how much am I to pay?”

He named the sum necessary for three months, and she handed him the money. As he wrote the receipt, he said:

“Wagner—that is an uncommon name for a Catholic, but I knew a worthy couple in Newark, New Jersey, of that name. I was two or three times at their house with Father Kelly.”

“Yes, Father; and they were my parents.”

“Your parents!” said Father Maginnis in surprise, looking closely for the first time at Minnie, and continuing: “Yes; you do look like Mrs. Wagner. I see it now.”

“Yes, Father; and that was one of the reasons why I came this morning, for here is a letter to you from mother, drawing herself to your recollection.”

“Oh, I recollect her well,” said the Father, taking the letter, and continuing: “And why were you going away a few minutes ago, without handing me this letter? But I suppose you thought I was a cross old fellow, and that you would not give me the letter?”

570

Minnie was about to give some other excuse, when the Father interrupted her with:

“Never mind; when you know me a little, you will find I am not so cross, after all.”

He read the letter carefully through, and, turning to Minnie, said in a familiar way:

“Minnie, bring your brother to see me; and when you write home, say to your mother that I will try to make you and him behave yourselves while you stay in San Francisco.”

Then looking at Minnie again, he said:

“There are a good many fellows here who will try to marry you, Minnie; but don't listen to any of them until you tell me. Tell your brother Walter I said this.”

Minnie blushed, and said:

“Oh, Father, do not be afraid about that! I do not want to get married. But, if I ever do change my mind, I will never take any one who is not approved of by you and Walter both.”

“Minnie, do you play and sing?”

“Yes, sir; a little.”

“I thought so, from your voice. When you get settled, will you help us with our choir on Sundays?”

“Yes, sir; with great pleasure.”

“Well, come next Sunday, and I will introduce you. Goodbye, Minnie; I am in a great hurry.”

So Minnie was on her way back, well pleased with rough, kindhearted Father Maginnis, and San Francisco began already to feel more like home. She felt as though she had thrown out an anchor to steady and hold their little craft in case of a storm.

When Walter reached the Oriental Hotel, he was shown up to Captain Ward's room. There he found everything looking in confusion and excitement. In one corner stood two policemen, talking earnestly, but in low, mysterious voices, to Ward, and to each other. As Walter entered, the door was locked behind him, and Ward came forward, and, in a sad, dejected tone, said:

“My dear, dear fellow, I have sad news for you this morning; but I hope you will bear it like a man.”

“Well,” said Walter, in a bold voice, “out with it, without preface.”

“All right; I see you have the true Yankee pluck about you, Walter. Well, we were robbed of every dollar we had in the 571 safe, and your seven thousand is, of course, gone with our twenty thousand!”

Walter was stunned for a moment, and remained without speaking; all his hopes and prospects of yesterday he saw now dashed with one blow to the ground. He tried to rally, but the blow was too severe to be at once overcome. So, without speaking, he began to walk up and down the room, in deep thought. His first thoughts were all of Minnie; her comfortable new home, where she and he had both expected so much enjoyment, had vanished. Then his thoughts ran back to his darling mother, to whom he had just written, urging her to make immediate preparations to join them in San Francisco. Then Fannie Eaton, somehow, came into his thoughts, and his heart sank very low, and he felt a suffocating sensation, as if half-choking. Then he made another effort to rally. He stopped short, and stamped with his foot on the floor, as if out of patience with himself and others, and, looking at the policemen and Ward, he exclaimed:

“Let the confounded money go! But how was it done? I would like to know that.”

Ward started at this sudden address and change in Walter's demeanor; but, recovering himself in a moment, he explained how he had been chloroformed, and how the robbers had taken the key of the safe, which, unfortunately, had only a simple lock, out of his vest pocket, from under his head. Then he introduced the two policemen to Walter, and told him that they advised that the robbery should be kept perfectly quiet, and that no one, in fact, should be informed of it. The policemen then explained to Walter that this was their best chance of tracing out the robbers, and that they had great hopes of yet recovering the money; but that it might take days, and even weeks, to do it, and that all would depend on the robbery being kept perfectly secret. Walter listened to all this, and then said:

“Well, in my judgment, the best way is to go right straight to Sam Brannan and William T. Coleman, and lay the case before them, and they will arouse the whole people in a search, and we will be sure to get the robbers, if not the money.”

“Well, Walter, that would be patriotic, anyway; and I have a mind to agree to it, although I know it would make it perfectly sure that neither you, Brown nor myself would ever recover a dollar of the lost money; for, when the robbers would find themselves run close, they would throw the

money in the bay rather 572 than be taken with it. However, if you feel like giving up the almost certainty of recovering the money, for the sake of making a fuss over the robbery—for that is all your plan would amount to—I will go in with you against my own judgment, and the judgment of Brown and these two policemen. But Brown will be here in a few minutes with two of the Vigilance Committee detective police. Let us hear what they advise.”

So Walter agreed to wait, and in a few minutes more Brown arrived with two men, whom he introduced as detectives of the Vigilance Committee. As they entered the room, Ward whispered to Walter:

“You can rely on these men, Wagner; for it was I who got Coleman to place them in the service of the Vigilance Committee.”

On being consulted, these men were even more decided than were the city policemen as to the policy of secrecy, and offered to take the matter into their own hands to work up. The result was that Walter consented to this mode of proceeding. Ward then took Walter aside, and said, in a depressed voice:

“You will have, my friend, to let your poor, dear sister into the secret; but caution her against mentioning it to any one. I assure you, my friend, I feel more for her in this matter than I do for any of us.”

“I do not doubt it, Captain; but she is a little soldier from her childhood up, and I am not sure but that she will bear it better than any of us.”

“Well, I trust so, friend Walter; so go and break it to her gently, and, in an hour or so, I will call and consult with you as to what had best be done; for all those bills for your furniture are to come in tomorrow, you know.”

Walter started, turned a little pale, and said:

“Yes, sure enough; what on earth will I do?”

“Well, that is a very hard matter to decide, Walter; but I will call as I said, and we will consult about it. So go to your poor sister without delay.”

Walter left, and he was no sooner out of the room than a general merry laugh ran round the crowd he left behind him.

“Well, Captain,” said Brown, “you did that well, as you always do when you hold the helm yourself.”

“None of your laughing, boys,” said Ward; “we have a nice game to play yet, and if you all do your parts as well as you did to-day, all will work to a charm.”

573

Then, turning to Brown, he said:

“Go at once and start in all those bills for the furniture, and tell each man to say that he will call to-morrow afternoon for the money, in accordance with terms they sold on. I will be at the house when the bills come, and will work up this part of my plan.”

When Walter reached home, Minnie had just taken off her things, and was giving some directions about lunch in a cheerful, happy voice, while the hired girl listened and talked at the same time.

“Well, wasn't the old Father cross at first, though?”

“Oh, yes, Jane, a little; but it is his manner. You can see that, and that he has a very kind, loving heart.”

“Oh, yes, Miss; sure that must be so, or he wouldn't take to caring for helpless children as a business for his whole life; that is plain, Miss.”

“I was glad to find he remembered mother and father. It makes me feel as if I had found an old friend here in San Francisco. He is the first I have found in the whole State, except one gentleman who is now in Oregon, though it is said that San Francisco is the greatest place in the world for meeting with old friends.”

“Yes, Miss; so they say. But I have only just arrived from the States, and have met no one I knew before, as yet.”

Minnie at that moment heard Walter's step in the sitting-room, and went to meet him. The moment her eyes rested on him, she saw something was wrong. His step was slow, his eyes turned away from her look, and he was very pale, and looked excited. She stopped short, as she walked towards him, saying:

“Walter dear, are you sick?”

Without at once answering, he threw himself into a chair, and said:

“No, Minnie, dear; I am not sick, but I have some very bad news to tell you, and you must be a brave little woman and stand up against it.”

With one bound, Minnie was opposite his chair, with her hands clasped tightly before her, her head leaned forward, her eyes fixed on Walter, and her whole expression of face, that of intense alarm; while the only word that escaped her lips was:

“Mother!”

“No, Minnie, no; I have heard nothing from dear mother, and am sure she is well.”

574

“James De Forest?” said Minnie, without a change of position or countenance, but in a lower and softer tone.

“No, no, Minnie; it is not—”

“Fannie Eaton?” went on Minnie, without waiting to hear Walter.

“No, no, Minnie; it is not the death of any one.”

“Oh, thank God! thank God!” said Minnie. And she stood erect and clasped her hands on her temples, as if to steady her excited thoughts. Then she threw herself into a chair near her brother, saying:

“Oh, dear Walter, I know your news must indeed be bad, for you look so sad and pale. But I can bear it now with composure, for I know it is not to take away our lives or the lives of loved ones; nor can it tarnish our names; and anything else, Walter, Californians ought not to shrink from. All last night my dreams were of poor father and darling mother. I was with them; and oh, so happy! And they spoke to me of God, of truth, of courage and of fortitude, and smiled and blessed me. So they were in my mind all day, and when you told me of bad news, I could think of nothing but poor mother.”

Walter took Minnie's hand in his, and said:

“Your words have already given me courage, Minnie, so I do not hesitate to tell you that last night we were robbed of every dollar I brought down to the city. In all, seven thousand dollars.”

Minnie stopped for a moment, while her hand grasped her brother's tightly. Then, looking up calmly in his face, she said:

“Walter, it is but a very little time since you arrived in this very city, without a dollar in your pocket, and fifty dollars in debt, and without any experience of California life. You drove team for White, McGlynn & Co., to make your first start. Three times since then you made a handsome beginning after a sweeping loss. You can do the same again. Yes; and, if I cannot help you in your

first move, I will at least be no drawback, for, you know, I can make hundreds of dollars giving music lessons in this city, which I will do until such time as you get a little ahead again.”

“Oh, Minnie, I am ashamed of myself when I hear you speak. You are always so hopeful, so courageous. Difficulties appear to be your glory, and somehow you always triumph over them.”

“Walter, I am but your sister in that respect; for every time 575 fortune has turned you back, you have pushed on again, and again won a new position.”

“Well, then, Minnie, let come what will, we will not be discouraged. Our present greatest difficulty is to pay for this furniture. Captain Ward says he has something to suggest in regard to this point of the business; so let us hear what he has to say, before we decide what to do.”

Then Walter told Minnie how the robbery had been effected, and all the particulars. And just as he had concluded doing so, he saw Ward across the street. Walter went to the door, and, as he reached it, the bell rang. The Captain was evidently surprised to meet the brother and sister in such calm and selfpossessed spirits. Minnie extended her hand to meet his, and said, with a smile:

“So you and Mr. Brown lost, too, Captain?”

“Oh, yes, my dear Miss Minnie; we lost all our ready money.” And then he added, in a low, mysterious voice: “But I have great hopes, by keeping the matter a perfect secret, that we will recover most of the lost money.”

“Yes; so my brother tells me. But I must confess I am not sanguine.”

Then, after some further talk over the robbery, Jane announced that lunch was ready, and the Captain accepted an invitation to join them, saying:

“After lunch I will explain to you, Wagner, how you had better manage these furniture bills.”

While they sat at lunch, the bell rang four times, and each time the girl went to the door, she came back with a bill for furniture, and a message that they would call to-morrow, in the afternoon, for the money. When lunch was over, Ward and Walter lit their cigars, and retired to a little porch at the back part of the house, to smoke. When seated, Ward began:

“Friend Wagner, I see this terrible loss has put you in a tight place, old fellow. Now, there is but one way out of it. It is this: Draw your note for two thousand dollars at sixty days, and get it discounted at Page, Bacon & Co.'s bank.”

“In the first place, Captain, they would not discount my note, unindorsed; and, in the next place, I could not meet it in sixty days, even if they did.”

“Oh, well, as to your last objection, Walter, I will have plenty of money by that time; for a five thousand dollar transaction 576 I have on hand will be in cash in about forty days from this date, and I will lend you the money for a few months. And to make you feel at your ease about taking it, I will charge you a reasonable interest, though I would in truth rather you accepted the use of the money without paying a dollar interest. No; don't speak, Walter, until I get through. Now, as to your first objection, I will undertake to get a friend of mine, with whom I do a large business, to indorse your note. This friend's indorsement will get the money for you as fast as it can be counted out.”

“Captain, that would be putting me under too much obligation to you. I see no show of very soon repaying you.”

“Oh, there will be no difficulty about that, Walter; I may have to call upon you for a favor some time; and I think I see one not far in the distance now, that I will call on you for; so that will make us even, you know. And when the two thousand dollars that Hilton owes you are paid, you can pay your note due me. This plan will enable you to live here with your sister for the present, and you will soon find something to do, if we are not lucky in recovering our money from the thieves.”

This proposition did look well to Walter; so he told the Captain he would take it into consideration, and call upon him early in the morning. After the Captain left, Walter explained the proposition to Minnie.

“Well, Walter dear, you know you are the best judge in all matters of business. The only objection I see to it, is that I have the greatest dislike to putting ourselves under such an obligation to Captain Ward. As to meeting the note, why, as you say, the money due from Hilton will do that, after four months. And then, you know, we can sell the the piano. It is new, and pianos are scarce in San Francisco. It was only by a chance Brown succeeded in getting it; so it ought to bring us the money readily.”

“Yes, dear sister; we will sell it, or anything that is necessary; but I would rather look around and see what we can do before I sell anything, especially your piano. I should think, Minnie, that you would now be satisfied that Captain Ward is a sincere friend. See how, notwithstanding his own great loss, he thinks of us so kindly. I know both you and De Forest have had a great prejudice against him.”

“I confess, Walter, that you are right in that; but I now begin to hope we were mistaken.”

577

“Why, Minnie, how can you hesitate about it? Look at his generous conduct on this occasion. What could be more offhand and kind?”

“Well, Walter, I say I begin to doubt my first impression. First impressions are often right, but they are sometimes greatly in the wrong, too; and I now begin to hope this is one such case.”

“*Begin* to hope, Minnie? I cannot understand why you do not acknowledge at once your first impressions, in this case, positively wrong.”

“Walter, I am satisfied to take your view of this matter as the correct one, because the facts before us compel me to do so. Let that satisfy you, dear Walter.”

“Well, that is all right, dear Minnie; and when James De Forest comes, he will be surprised to find how mistaken his judgment was in this case.”

Just as they had come to this compromise, the bell rang, and another furniture bill was handed in, with the same message that accompanied the others.

Early the next morning, Walter was at the Oriental Hotel. Ward received him most cordially. He drew from his desk a blank note, such as was used by the bank of Page, Bacon & Co., and filled it up nicely for two thousand dollars at sixty days. Walter signed it. Then Ward told him to remain where he was while he went to get it indorsed by his friend. In an hour he returned, and as he entered the room he said:

“Well, did the young man bring the note?”

“No, Captain; I have seen no one since.”

“Oh, well,” said the Captain, “he will be here in a few minutes. When I went out that time I was called off, and I gave the note to a young friend of mine to take to Macondray & Co. and request in my name to have that firm indorse it for me; and I told him as soon as indorsed to bring it to you.”

As Ward spoke, a not very prepossessing young man walked in, with the note in his hand.

“Oh, I got here before you,” said Ward, addressing the young man. “Well, did the old Captain indorse it?”

“Mr. Otis did, sir,” said the young man, as he handed the note to Ward, now indorsed “Macondray & Co.” “When I got there, the Captain was alone, and he said I would have to wait for Mr. Otis, as he never attended to that sort of business. That was what delayed me.”

578

“Oh, well, that is all right. You can go, Henry, as I have some business with my friend here.”

Then, turning to Walter, Ward continued:

“Are you acquainted at the bank, Wagner?”

“Not in the least.”

“Well, you will have to get some one well acquainted there to introduce you.”

“Well, I know John A. McGlynn. I once worked for him. I met him yesterday, and he recollected me, and was very friendly. I am also well acquainted with the firm of Allen, Wheeler & Co.”

Ward thought a moment, and then said:

“Oh, it is not necessary for you to go hunting up any one. Let us walk up towards the bank, and I will strike some one just there, who will introduce you on my say so. I would do it myself, but I have heretofore done my business with Burgoyne & Co., and am not acquainted with the people at Page, Bacon & Co.'s.”

So, lighting their cigars, Walter and Ward walked up to Montgomery street, and stood talking at the corner of California and Montgomery. In a few minutes Michael Reese came along, and, just as he turned to enter the bank, Ward stopped him, saying:

“Please let me ask you a favor, Mr. Reese.”

Michael looked a little cautious, not knowing what was next coming, and there was a sort of a nervous twitching near his pocket, as if he feared a break was going to be made in that direction, in some way he did not comprehend. However, as soon as he understood that that was not Ward's intention, an expression of relief and almost pleasure spread over Michael's great, big, always sorrowful-looking, fat face, and Ward went on:

“I just want you, Mr. Reese, to recognize my friend, Mr. Wagner, here, in the bank, as he has a little business to do with them.”

“With pleasure,” said Michael; and he walked in with Walter, and introduced him in an off-hand, decided way, as though he was an old acquaintance, and then went into the company's private office to attend to his own business.

The note was examined, found all right, and the money was handed out without hesitation to Walter, who immediately left to pay up his furniture bills, which he did that afternoon, and found that he had just two hundred dollars left. This put him, for the present, quite at his ease, and he began to plan and make 579 inquiries for an opening where he could make a new beginning. He had a long talk with Mr. McGlynn, Edmund Allen and others; but a start was not to be made in a day, when one had no money to help him. So nearly three weeks passed, without much progress being made in the way of making a permanent new start. Two or three openings did appear, but Ward and Brown always persuaded Walter to wait a little longer, pretending that they had got on the track of the lost gold-dust, and were in hopes of soon recovering it.

Minnie had been to see her old friend, Mrs. Allen, and was by her introduced to two or three families, who had daughters anxious to take music lessons. So Minnie at once commenced to teach music, and found pupils enough to fill her spare hours. As she had her own piano, the scholars came to her cottage, and her time passed pleasantly, as well as profitably. She had one serious annoyance, that sometimes was almost intolerable to her. It was Captain Ward's constant and devoted attentions. When polite to him, he seemed to grow wild with excitement, and overwhelming in his devotions to her. He brought her all sorts of little presents. She did not want to take them; but yet they were too trifling to refuse. When she was decidedly cold and repelling in her manner, his countenance would often become frightfully dark; so that, in actual fear, she would again smile, and again he would grow fierce in his devotion. Thus three weeks passed, and it was now the first week in May.

CHAPTER XIX.

MORE TROUBLE FOR WALTER—MINNIE'S REQUEST.

When Walter walked off from the bank with the money to pay his furniture debts, Ward looked after him with a grim smile, as he muttered to himself:

“He little thinks that he is now a forger in the eyes of the law, and that at any moment I can show him the door of San Quentin, if he refuses any request I make of him. Oh, yes; my work is as good as done! I have him now where I want him! I wonder what would old Captain Macondray, or that sharp young Jim Otis think if they were to see that note discounted to-day, with their indorsement on it? But it is an excellent imitation of their handwriting; I am proud of the way I executed it. Yes; my old ability in that line has not left me. If Jim Otis ever sees it, he will, at first, believe he must have written it himself; but he never will see it if Walter does as I order him to do. Yes, *order* him; I have him now where I can order him, but I will take things cool; I will be as devoted to Minnie as any lover should be. I will not press things too fast at first. I will make her trifling presents, and act the cool, moderate lover; that is the way to take her sort. Then if she scorns me”—here his brow knit to a heavy frown, and his eyes shone with a dark fire, as he continued, in a low, menacing tone: “I will just explain to her her brother's true position. Oh, that will settle matters; for to save him from disgrace, I believe she would walk into the infernal regions with any one, and she will lose nothing by taking me; for, personally, I am a much handsomer man than this De Forest.”

Ward had now reached the Oriental, and found Brown waiting for him.

“Well, Brown,” said he; “all went off first-rate. The note is in the bank; he has taken the money. I have him now where I want him.”

581

“Well, Captain, how soon will you open on them, and bring things to a conclusion? Do not wait too long, for I tell you these Yankee Californians can overcome any difficulty, and this fellow Wagner is one of them, sure. The first thing you know will be that he has some lucrative speculation on hand, and that he has contrived to get the money to pay that note.”

“I grant you, Brown, that if you and I were asleep, that might be so. No; we must watch to prevent his getting into any such good luck. We can prevent it by throwing out hints, in a private way, to damage his character; but in doing so we must be careful to whom we talk of him, for a discovery that either you or I spoke of him slightly would be ruinous. It will not do for me to rush matters with my intended. No; I must try to win the girl by soft means, so that she will find it easier to save her brother by taking me when the time comes.”

“Well, how long are you going to fool around here?” said Brown, in a dissatisfied tone of voice.

“Well, I will promise you to bring things to a conclusion by the first week in May.”

“All right, Captain; I will hold you to your word.”

In about two weeks after this conversation, Brown strolled one morning into Ward's room, and, as he threw himself into a chair. he said:

“Well, Captain, how do you come on in love matters? Are you keeping Lizzie quiet, and are you winning your way all right with Miss Wagner?”

“As to Lizzie,” said Ward, laughing, “she is all right. No trouble in that quarter, as I often told you before, though Miss Scott had the impudence to tell me, the last day I called there, that she ‘really thought it was time for me to save Miss Lawson from remark by at once fulfilling my engagement to her.’ I understood the old maid, but I did not pretend to. She wanted to impress me as to the highly respectable character of her house. Oh, yes; I understood her perfectly, but I gave her no satisfaction, and gave my usual excuse to Lizzie herself for not bringing the parson.” And here Ward laughed again, and then went on: “As to Miss Wagner, of whom you inquire, I can not say I get on very satisfactorily. She is making more money than I like at teaching music, and is very independent all at once, as her brother would be, too, if I had not balked some of his plans. Sometimes Minnie is in one mood, sometimes in another. I will 582 not fool, as you call it, much

longer with her. I have determined to have her next week, either with her consent or without it. I do not now care much which.”

The last part of this speech was made in the bitterest tone of voice, and with a dark, fierce look. Brown did not care to pursue the conversation any further; so rising, he said:

“Well, I will hold everything about the Blue Bell in perfect readiness for sea.”

“All right, Brown; I will give you one day's notice.”

On the morning following this conversation between the confederates, as Walter arose from the breakfast table, the bell rang, and he was handed a note. It was from Ward, and ran in this way:

MY DEAR FRIEND: I want to see you at once. I have made a painful discovery, which you should at once know of. Come as soon as you can to my room at the Oriental, but do not let Miss Minnie know that I have sent for you, as we must keep the painful discovery from her. Your sincere friend,
WARD.

Minnie's eyes were on Walter while he read the note, and she saw that he looked surprised and troubled; but she waited in silence for him to speak. Walter read the note over a second time. Then, turning to Minnie and handing it to her, said:

“I wonder what in the world that can mean! He says not to mention the matter to you, Minnie; but Captain Ward does not know that you are my chief of counsel—my first lieutenant, without whom the ship, in the first place, would never have put to sea, and in the next place, without whom it would have gone ashore after it was at sea.”

Minnie was too anxious as to the contents of the note to notice Walter's compliments. She glanced over it quickly; then did as Walter had done—read it slowly over again. Looking up with the same sort of surprise on her countenance, she said:

“I cannot imagine, Walter, but I suppose it must be that they have discovered something that shows the impossibility of your ever getting back a dollar of the stolen money.”

“Yes, Minnie; that must be what it means. But that does not bother me much, for I had but very little hope left about that money.”

“Why, the fact is, I am glad the matter is at an end, Walter, for the hope was a sort of drawback to you. So go and see what it is, and come and tell me.”

583

Walter at once left for the Oriental Hotel, and Minnie, feeling sure that they anticipated correctly what the trouble was, waited without much anxiety for Walter's return. In an hour he came, but he was pale and haggard-looking. His step, as he approached the house, was awkward and unsteady. Minnie saw all this from the window, and, springing to the door, threw it open, seized Walter's arm, and, looking up into his face with a countenance as pale as his own, but calm, said:

“Speak, darling Walter, speak! And, whatever it is you have to tell, try and not forget that God is right here by us, and will guard us!”

“Minnie,” said Walter; “the news is surely bad, but, as you say, God can guard us, and to Him alone can we turn.”

“Go on, darling Walter! Courage has already come to me to listen.”

While speaking, they had entered the parlor, and sat together on the sofa. Minnie's eyes were fixed on Walter's face, as she listened to what he told her. He explained in as few words as possible, that Ward had last night discovered that the indorsement of Macondray & Co., on the note Walter had discounted in the bank, was a forgery.

Ward, he said, had happened to call at Macondray & Co.'s, on some business, and was surprised when Mr. Otis began to explain to him why it was that he could not comply with his request the

other day, and indorse that note he had sent them for indorsement. Ward said he saw at once that something must be wrong, but did not let Mr. Otis observe this, but returned home, and, with Mr. Brown's assistance, hunted up the young man who took the note to Macondray & Co., and was astonished when the fellow acknowledged that the old Captain himself and Mr. Otis had both refused to indorse the note, and that it was he himself who had written the indorsement. The young fellow's only excuse for this act of villainy was that he wanted to borrow a twenty from Ward, and feared Macondray & Co.'s refusal would put him in such bad humor, that he would not lend the money. Walter now continued:

“Of course the way would be for me to take this note up at once and destroy it; but where is the money to do it with? Ward has not got it, Brown has not a dollar, and of course I have not.”

As Walter spoke, he sank back, pale and irresolute, and then added in a low voice:

584

“Oh, Minnie, I could have faced anything but this danger of disgrace! Can you see any way of escape, Minnie?”

Minnie, while Walter was speaking, was sitting erect; her eyes were all bright; she was, perhaps, pale, but there was a tinge of red in her cheeks. As Walter addressed these words to her, she pushed back her clustering hair with both hands from her temples; then arose to her feet, and, turning towards him, she stood her full height, and, letting one hand rest on his shoulder, she said, evidently under great excitement, but perfectly calm, while a smile of confidence and courage lit up for a moment her beautiful face:

“See a way out of it, Walter? I may not at this moment see the way; but, my brother, we both know in our hearts that our name is untarnished. God knows it, too; and do not, Walter, for one moment, doubt that He, in His goodness and mercy, will show us the way out. This false position you have fallen into, without its being your fault, undoubtedly gives us a great difficulty to overcome; but, Walter, we are not the children of affluence, ease and luxury. No; from our earliest childhood we have had to battle for every inch of our way in the world. Shall we now falter when the greatest

difficulty of our lives is before us? No, no! We will not falter; we will do our best, and put our unwavering trust in that God who has never failed us! It may be His holy will that our worldly goods be taken from us, perhaps, for our good, but do not doubt, my darling Walter, that, in His watchful care of us, if we do our part He will guard our name from the designs of wicked men! Our poor father was struck down to a bed of painful sickness; but he was honored by all who knew him to the last, for his unsullied good name. Our dear mother was once a stranger in the great city of New York; avoided and mistrusted on account of her religious faith; but God, from among those who did not believe as she believed, raised up to her as loving and true a protector as ever stood by wife. When I myself was threatened, God raised up a kind and generous deliverer, from among the very men who sought my destruction. No, my dear brother; we will ask of God nothing on earth but the continuance to us of our untarnished name, that with it we may serve Him with brighter honor. And, though the struggle grow ever so dark around us, let us not dare to doubt the result, for to doubt would be ingratitude to God. Yes, Walter, we are both Californians in heart and soul, 585 and where is the Californian that, in danger or in trouble, will be a coward? No; they do not seek trouble and difficulties, but when such come it is their glory to overcome and triumph over them.”

As Minnie spoke, Walter's expression of countenance entirely changed. It no longer expressed doubt and fear, but resumed its wonted bold, confident look, and, grasping Minnie's hand, he kissed it, and exclaimed:

“Oh, Minnie, you have brought me to myself! We have an unsullied name, and, with God's help, we will save it. I no longer doubt, for, as you say, the same good and merciful Being who guarded our darling parents in all their life-long struggle, and saved you on that terrible night, will not now desert you in this danger; nor me either, I trust.”

“Walter, dear, it is easy to speak brave words; but remember, we will have to follow them with brave actions; and on you all depends, not on me.”

As Minnie spoke, she raised one hand to her forehead and let her eyes drop on the floor, as if in thought.

“Walter, have you any, the least, suspicion of Captain Ward's truth and honesty in this matter?”

Walter started and looked surprised, as he said, in a halt annoyed tone: “Minnie dear, you, De Forest and Hilton have never liked Ward from the first, and that is the only reason why such thoughts come into your head. Of course I have not the least doubt of him. No; I have no more doubt of him than I have of myself.”

“Well, Walter dear, I do not like to annoy you by seeming to doubt any one you have such an undoubted confidence in; but recollect, this position of ours is no child's play. We must look at every point in it carefully; and the fact that two such clear-sighted men as Hilton and De Forest both did doubt Ward's honesty of intention makes it no more than prudent of us to take their opinions into consideration. And, Walter, I will now tell you that lately I find myself thinking of the strange circumstances of that robbery, and the way they got you to keep it a secret. And, somehow, a frightful idea that they themselves were the robbers comes forcibly to my mind.”

Walter, who had been walking up and down the room, now stopped short, saying:

“Why, Minnie, you astonish me! What on earth could be the motive for such an act? Were we not going into business together, and was not everything arranged as they wished?”

“Well, Walter, I know all that; but the more I think of it the more the conviction forces itself on me. I cannot shake it off, and all I want of you, Walter, is that in all your intercourse with these men, for the next few days, you will keep my view of the matter before your eyes. That will put you on your guard; for, if I am right, our position is a terrible one, for they will prevent you, if possible, from raising the money to take up that note. If they are honest, we can, in some way, get the money; but if they are not, it will be mighty hard; but yet we will do it in some way.”

“Well, Minnie, I will do as you say; but it pains me to harbor a doubt of two such friends as I have always found Ward and Brown to be.”

“I do not want you, Walter, to harbor a doubt; but just to recollect that I *do* harbor a doubt, and that I cannot for the life of me shake it off. When they are talking to you, take my view as well as your own into consideration. Promise me that, Walter, and I am satisfied.”

“Well, dear Minnie, I promise; so that is agreed on. Now, the next consideration is, what shall be our first move to get the money? All I have in this world is this furniture and those two Hilton notes, which draw no interest, and have so long to run yet, that here in California they would be counted as almost worthless; for four months are four years here with us in California.”

“Where are those notes, Walter?”

“Oh, they are all right. The robbers did not look on them as of any value, so they left them where they were in Ward's safe.”

“And is that where they are now?” said Minnie, looking alarmed.

“Yes, of course, Minnie.”

Well, Walter dear, go at once and possess yourself of the two notes, and if Ward undertakes to make excuses and put you off, I want you to promise me that nothing he does or says will prevent you getting the notes.”

“Why, Minnie, of course I will get the notes.”

“No, no, Walter; but promise me that you will bring them here this very evening, even if you had to quarrel with Ward 587 and Brown both to get them. I tell you, Walter, they will try to prevent your taking them; so promise me.”

“Well, Minnie, you are a great girl,” said Walter, half laughing; “so I suppose I must promise you again, and I do; so now be satisfied.”

“Well, I am satisfied, dear Walter; and now, while you are away, I will think and think, and tell you what comes into my head when you come back.”

CHAPTER XX.

ARRIVAL OF JAMES DE FOREST—MINNIE'S GENEROSITY.

After Walter had left to get the notes from Ward, Minnie retired to her bed-room, and dropped on her knees near her bed. Leaning forward, she covered her face with her hands, and then her whole inmost thoughts were with God. Oh, yes; prepare, Minnie, for another trial for you is at hand that will test your power of will and your self-control to the utmost, and bring an ache of sympathy to your heart that it never felt before. For ten minutes Minnie remained without a perceptible movement. Then, suddenly, she starts to her feet, her hands clasped together, her head bent forward, in a listening attitude; for she has heard a step on the front porch that has made her heart leap to her throat so as to almost choke her. She is now pale as death, as she heard her name pronounced by a manly, firm voice, saying to Jane, who opened the door:

“Is Miss Minnie Wagner at home?”

Yes; her heart had told her truly it was he. She could not move. The door opened, and Jane said:

“Miss Minnie; a gentleman, who gives his name as Mr. De Forest, is in the sitting-room to see you.”

Minnie made no answer, but as the girl left she again dropped on her knees, and again for a moment rested her face in her hands, while her frame trembled and shrank together, as if enduring or struggling against some inward pain. Then relief seemed to come, and, drawing a long breath, she wiped away with her handkerchief the cold perspiration from her forehead, and, rising to her feet, said, half-aloud: “There, I can go through it now.”

Without even a glance at her mirror, she walks into the sitting-room. James heard her step, and, his face beaming with smiles and joyous excitement, advanced to meet her.

“Oh, James, I am so glad to see you,” she said, taking his outstretched hand. “How are you?”

589

“I am first-rate, Minnie.”

He stopped, he started a little, and, looking into her face while he still retained her hand in his, he added:

“But, dear Minnie, you do not look well, and your hand is so cold. Are you sick, or what is the matter, Minnie?”

“My health is perfectly good, James, and I am only a little out of sorts this morning; but don't mind that. When did you get here?”

James, now feeling half-alarmed, he could not tell why exactly, said:

“I got here, Minnie, about two hours ago, and, as fast as I could, put myself in a fit rig, found this cottage of yours and came to see you.”

“Oh, that was so good of you, James, to come so soon.”

De Forest looked puzzled, and said:

“No, Minnie; it was not good of me, for I could not stay away if I tried ever so hard.”

Here Minnie tried to laugh, but her laugh was a failure, and evidently forced, and did not sound the least like her natural sweet, musical laugh.

“Have you seen Walter, James?”

“No,” said De Forest; “I have not, Minnie.”

De Forest's manner now grew serious in spite of himself, and, turning towards Minnie, he looked her full in the face, endeavoring, if possible, to read its meaning, while he asked two or three common-place questions, such as how she liked living in San Francisco, and if she had made many new acquaintances in the city. Minnie answered all his questions nicely, and fully, but De Forest saw that her manner had a quiet, subdued sadness about it, and when she spoke his name, he thought she somehow seemed to linger on it, with a peculiar, sweet intonation. He could no longer hold out. He stood up, and walked over and took a chair close to hers; then said, in a voice of deep feeling:

“Minnie, something is the matter with you. Can you tell me what it is?”

Minnie did not speak; she seemed to be making a desperate effort for command over herself.

“Oh, Minnie, speak! In mercy tell me!”

Minnie recovered her quiet manner, and said:

“James, I cannot if I would, deceive you. Walter and I have a serious trouble to overcome, which I cannot disclose just now to 590 any one on earth. It will, I trust in God, pass away; but until the matter is decided, I must ask you to be generous enough not to ask me to explain further.”

“Not to explain to me! Minnie, who have loved you as a child, a girl and a woman, with unwavering fidelity! If some cloud, Minnie, has fallen on your path, will you not allow me to stand by your side and share it with you? I care not how heavy or how dark it is, if I am sharing it with you, and perhaps making it lighter to you.”

While De Forest spoke, Minnie's eyes, full of the saddest light, were on his face, and, with a look and tone of earnest entreaty, she said:

“Oh, James, I cannot accede to your request, for to do so would lower myself in my own estimation, and if I did that, I would not be the girl that James De Forest loved in his boyhood and his manhood. No, James, I will die before I let myself do one act that in my own judgment would make me less worthy of the love you have offered to shield my path through life with. Even if I am forced to turn that love away, I will never be unworthy of it.”

“Forced to turn it away! Oh, my God, Minnie, what can all this mean? I came here to claim you for my bride. I have had Walter's consent long ago, and when I parted with you last, you gave me to understand in your own sweet way that you loved me. Oh, Minnie, have I done anything to forfeit that love, which is life itself to me? Oh, yes, and more than life a thousand times; because if you discard me, every day of the future of this life is intolerably dark to me.”

Minnie preserved her calm, quiet demeanor, but looked intensely miserable, as she said:

“Done anything, James, to forfeit my love! No, James; you have done nothing to forfeit it, and it grieves me to pain you, as I am now obliged to do. Your name and your honor are untarnished, and you are entitled to a partner through life with as fair a name as your own.”

Minnie stopped speaking, seemingly overpowered with her feelings, and De Forest saw, as he looked in her face, an expression of almost agony, and that she was evidently struggling against some powerful emotion of her heart. He was startled, and, hardly knowing how to act, he took her hand in his. It was cold as ice, and in a low, trembling, sad voice, he said:

“Minnie, is there not some strange infatuation about all this? 591 Are you not, perhaps, making us both miserable under a misapprehension? But I will not urge you to answer, Minnie. I do not want to act selfishly, and I will now, if it is necessary to your happiness, forego any further questions. But do not blame me for wishing to share with you this trouble, whatever it may be; but I fear I am giving you pain, Minnie; so tell me what you want me to do, and I will obey without asking another question.”

Minnie sat up erect, and, in a clear, steady voice, said:

“James, you are not acting selfishly; you are the same generous man to me to-day that you were long, long ago, as a boy, when we were children together; and I am grieved to be obliged to trespass on your generosity by asking you to do what I want you to do now.”

“Speak, Minnie, speak; what you say shall be law to me.”

“I will ask you, James, to defer this subject for one month, leaving each of us perfectly free.”

“I will so defer it, and leave you perfectly free, Minnie; will not that do?”

“No, no, James; that is not the way I want it to be.” And Minnie was now paler than ever, and her lips quivered as she spoke.

“Well, Minnie, then it shall be as you say; one month, and you will accept my love, or fully explain to me why you cannot do so?”

“Yes, James; that is the promise between us.”

“Well, I am satisfied, Minnie; and now I will return to Oregon by the steamer that leaves here early in the morning; for, oh, Minnie, I could not endure to stay here under these circumstances.”

“Forgive me, James, for the pain I give you; but you will yet understand me.”

“You are freely forgiven; and forgive me, dear Minnie, for the pain I gave you.” And, obeying a sudden impulse, De Forest snatched her up in his arms and kissed her, and whispered: “God bless you, and keep you safe, Minnie!” And in a moment more James De Forest was hurrying down Kearny street towards the hotel.

As De Forest disappeared, Minnie went quickly to her room, closed the door, and, throwing herself into a chair, gave way to a fit of uncontrolled weeping.

“Oh!” she exclaimed, while interrupted by choking sobs, 592 “how miserable I have made him! But what could I do? If I had disclosed our trouble to him, it would be the same as asking him to help Walter out of it with his money, and that would kill poor Walter; for he could never brook the idea that his name should be saved from dishonor by the man to whom he was about to give his sister for a wife. Oh, no; if James De Forest was only seeking to be a friend, and nothing more, I would have told him all, and be glad to have him assist us; but, as it was, I could not do that. No; before ever I consent to be his bride, *our* name must be as unsullied as his own, and he must have nothing to do with making it so. It is unsullied, I know, and God will, in his goodness, enable us to make that manifest. Then I will be James' equal, and he will forgive when he hears my explanation, because any other course would be unworthy of such a wife as he deserves. Well, just as soon as we get things all right, I will write to him.”

The night is closing in on this eventful day. Jane has just rapped at Minnie's door, to tell her that tea is all ready to bring in.

“Hold it back a little, Jane, until my brother comes back,” Minnie answers; and then she wipes away all traces of her tears, as far as it was possible, and returns to the sitting-room. She had not long to wait, for Walter's step was on the porch just as she had thrown herself on the sofa.

“Well, dear Walter,” she exclaims, “did you get the notes?”

“Yes, Minnie, I did; but I fear I hurt the feelings of both our friends, Ward and Brown; and if it had not been for the promise I made you, I certainly should not have insisted on getting the notes to-night.”

“Oh, then, they *did* make excuses, did they?” exclaimed Minnie, in an excited voice. “Oh, how glad I am that you got the notes!”

“Why, Minnie, you should not be so suspicious of friends.”

“Walter, did you do as I asked you to do while you were talking to these men? Did you keep my suspicions in your thoughts?”

“Yes, Minnie; and I did not notice anything to be suspicious about. The only thing you were right in was in regard to the notes.”

“Well, how was it about the notes? Tell me every word that passed about the notes, dear Walter.”

593

“Well, I went to Ward's room, and found Brown there, and they were both as cordial as it was possible; and Ward told me that they were just planning how to help me to raise the money to take up the note. ‘But,’ said Ward, ‘it is impossible to do it, except I can get my note taken in its place.’ I said, ‘Would not those Hilton notes help in some way?’ ‘Oh, no,’ said he, ‘a note of a country merchant at three or four months, drawing no interest, could give no sort of help in this market.’ While he spoke he opened his safe and continued, ‘I have a city bond here for a thousand dollars that, perhaps, could be used to help;’ and he took a bundle of papers out of the safe to look for it. While he was turning the papers over, I saw the Hilton notes, and I took them up, and, opening my pocket-book, I began to place them in it. ‘Oh,’ said the Captain, ‘leave those notes here. They will be safer with me, and I will take them and this bond, to-morrow, and I am almost sure I can get enough of money with them to take up that note.’ This surprised me, as it was only a moment before he had said that the notes were worth nothing in this market, and I would have at once left them but for my promise to you; so I said, ‘I have promised to show these notes to a friend this evening, so I will have to take them home.’ ‘Oh, never mind your promise,’ said Ward; ‘business is business; so leave the notes here.’ ‘Oh, I must keep my promise, Captain,’ said I. Then he looked very angry, more so than I ever saw him, and said: ‘Oh, well, Wagner, if you are going to take this matter in your own hands, of course you do not want friends to help you.’ ‘Of course I do want friends to help me, Captain, out of a scrape they helped me to get into.’ ‘Mr. Wagner, do you suppose that I had any other motive than the most disinterested friendship when I sent that unfortunate note to Macondray & Co. for their indorsement?’ ‘Of course not, Captain,’ said I; ‘but, nevertheless, if you had not given it to that villainous boy to take there, all this trouble would never

have happened.’ ‘Well, that is the reason I am so anxious to help you out; so leave those notes, and I will guarantee I can get the money for you to-morrow.’ ‘But I told you, Captain, that I cannot leave the notes, because I have promised to show them to a friend; and, of course, I will keep my promise.’ ‘Oh, well, let us say no more about the matter. I will not quarrel with you, Wagner, about a thing that does not concern me in the least, only so far as I can serve you.’ 594 ‘Thank you, Captain,’ said I, as I arose and left the room. Brown stood up at the same time, and walked down stairs with me. As we reached the street, he said: ‘Wagner, if I were you, I would go back and leave those notes with the Captain. I think you hurt his feelings in the way you took them out of his hand.’ ‘Why, Brown,’ said I, ‘it is impossible for me to leave them, for I must keep my promise.’ ‘Oh, do as you like,’ said he; ‘it is none of my business.’ That was about all that passed.”

“Walter, this conduct of these men is only to be accounted for on my theory, that Ward and Brown are leagued against us for some purpose.”

“But Minnie, what possible purpose can they have in view?”

“Well, I cannot exactly say now; but, Walter, you cannot be too much on your guard; for, recollect there is more than life at stake, and you see that, so far, I was correct, for I told you that they would make difficulties about surrendering those notes.”

“Well, Minnie, I confess I am puzzled, and I acknowledge that things do look as if you must be right. Yet I cannot bring myself fully to believe so, but it puts me much more on my guard.”

“That is all I want, dear Walter. Let us now take our tea, for it has been ready a long time; and after tea I have something to tell you.”

As Minnie spoke, she took Walter's arm, and they went into the dining-room and sat down, and talked cheerfully while they disposed of their evening meal. Minnie's manner was not what you would call excited, but was such as a person has, who is hard pressed with business, and who eats and sleeps as a matter of duty, to enable him to physically endure what he is called on to go through. This evening she seemed to sit higher and more erect than Walter had ever seen her. Her

voice was as sweet as ever, but it was bold and decisive in its intonation. Walter remarked all this, and said to himself:

“Yes; she has been planning some decisive action for to-morrow; I know her manner so well. I suppose she will tell me after supper.”

Tea over, they retired to the little sitting-room.

“Come, Walter,” Minnie said, “and sit down near me on the sofa, and let me rest my head on your shoulder, while I tell you what I want to tell you.”

595

“Yes, dear sister Minnie, come and sit just as you say, and tell me all you want to tell me, for you have had an excited day of it.”

As Walter spoke, he took his seat on the sofa, and Minnie sat close to him, holding the arm next to her with both her hands, and laying her head against his shoulder, her eyes looked downwards as she said, in a soft, low tone:

“James De Forest was here; did you know it?”

“Why, no, Minnie; is it possible; and where is he gone? Why did he not wait to see me?”

Minnie did not change her position, but said, in a yet lower voice:

“He is going back again to Oregon in the morning, and will not be here again before he leaves.”

“Not be here again, Minnie? And why so, for mercy sake?”

Minnie, for a moment, was silent, and Walter felt her struggling to overcome some emotion; then, in the same low voice, and yet in the same position, but that Walter felt her hands grasp his arm yet closer, she said:

“Walter, James said he had your consent to talk to me of his views of the future, you know.”

“Yes, Minnie, darling, he had my full consent; and he told me he had a half-sort of an understanding with you that he was to propose matters to you in relation to his and your future on his visit to us this May. Was that your understanding?”

“Yes, that was our understanding, Walter dear,” said Minnie, in the same subdued voice.

“And has he left without doing so, Minnie?” said Walter, in an angry tone, evidently mistaking the cause of Minnie's dejected manner.

“No, no, dear Walter; he begged and implored of me to share with him all he had in the world, and was terribly miserable when I had to turn him away.”

The last words were spoken so low that Walter could only just hear them, and Minnie trembled with agitation.

“Had to turn him away? Minnie, you astonish me, for I thought he was just the sort of man you would be sure to admire, and value, and he has been our friend from childhood, you know.”

“Oh, yes, dear Walter; so I do, but with this danger hanging over our good name, how could I consent to listen to him until that danger was past?”

596

Walter at once threw his arm around his sister's waist, and, stooping, kissed her forehead, saying in a low voice:

“Now, I understand darling Minnie, your view of your duty under the circumstances, and I suppose you could give him no explanation of your refusal to listen to him, and that he went off considering himself rejected for good. Oh, darling sister, how sorry I am for you both!”

“I am sorry for poor James, Walter; but he was so generous that he said he would come for a final answer in one month.”

“Oh, then he will come back for your answer in a month. How noble of him! What reason did you give him for not explaining to him what your difficulty was?”

“I told him I could give him none, and he forebore to ask me further.”

“Dear Minnie, he is indeed generous and truly noble; and God grant that we may be able when he comes back to explain all to his full satisfaction.”

“Then, dear Walter, you approve of all I did, and think I could not have done otherwise? for I have kept thinking and thinking of poor James. He looked so sorrowful and hurt, when I told him it was impossible for me to explain, and it gives me comfort to have you think I could not have acted in any other way.”

“No, no, dear Minnie; you could not have acted differently, no matter what the consequences were. I understand your views fully, Minnie, and it is my own. If James De Forest was to come forward to-morrow and take up that note, and in that way destroy all evidence against me, a lingering doubt might remain in his mind of my truth, even against his own will; and that would be intolerable to both of us. No, when my darling Minnie consents to change her name, all shall know that the one she lays aside is as bright and untarnished as the one she accepts in its place.”

Minnie now sits up, and, wiping away tears that had forced themselves on her cheek, she turned to her brother, and, pushing back his clustering brown hair from his forehead, kissed it, saying:

“Oh, Walter, I feel so much better since I have had this understanding with you.”

“Well, Minnie, this is a terrible time of trial for you; but you must try and bear up and be the brave little woman you always have been. I am a man, but somehow I seem to draw my courage from

you; and it was always so, as far back as I can recollect. Minnie, can you explain it to me, that when a difficulty or a trial comes, I look to you for confidence and courage, and you never fail me?

“Walter dear, a woman was not given physical strength to battle and fight in the world and overcome great physical difficulties, as men can; but our dear mother always taught me that the woman's place was to stand close to the father, husband, or brother, in all dangers, and inspire them with moral courage and confidence in God, to the utmost of her ability; and that God had gifted her with peculiar power to enable her to fulfill this, her destiny; and that a woman who shrank from this duty, or failed in this, her part, was just no woman at all. So, dear Walter, if I sometimes have been of some use to you, when you were beset by difficulties, I deserve no credit for it; for I but did my simple duty, the neglect of which would have been criminal.”

“Oh, how clearly I see that our dear mother was right, Minnie; and yet there are foolish men, and foolish women, too, who would, if they were permitted, drag women away from this holy and ‘better part’ she has been assigned to, and in their pride and folly would rush the whole sex into the field of party politics, with all its bitter dissensions, often corrupting and degrading to the strongest men, whose duty compels them not to flinch from the necessary contest, be it ever so fierce, rough, or distasteful to them.”

“I trust, dear Walter, the number of such misguided persons of either sex is very small, and may long continue so.”

“I heartily join with you in that wish, dear sister; and now, to go back to our own immediate business, I was just reminding you that it was your time of trial; and I want you to prepare for a disagreeable scene sure to come before you to-morrow.”

“Ah!” said Minnie a little startled, sitting up and looking into Walter's face: “What is it, dear Walter?”

“Well, dear Minnie, not to keep you in suspense, Captain Ward to-day intimated to me that he was a suitor for your hand. I at once told him that in that matter you were your own mistress. ‘Then,’ said

he, ‘you have no objection to my speaking to Miss Minnie herself?’ I said, ‘None in the world.’ So he will undoubtedly see you on the subject to-morrow.”

“Why, Walter, the man cannot have common sense to make 598 such a proposal; for I have in every way rejected his attentions in the most marked way!”

“Well, dear Minnie, you will have to give him an answer he cannot misunderstand; and that will end it, of course.”

“Well, Walter, I am glad you told me, because I will prepare myself, and I will try not to wound his feelings more than I can help.”

Then Minnie proposed to Walter that he and she should go together and see Father Maginnis, and disclose to him, as a friend, their exact position in regard to this note, and tell him of the security they could give to raise the two thousand dollars.

“And,” said Minnie, “he will know we are telling him the truth, and perhaps he will find some one who has the money who will be willing to lend it to you.”

After a moment's reflection, Walter agreed to the proposition, and the more they discussed it, the more hopes they had of its success. So the brother and sister separated that evening; if not in happy spirits, yet hopeful, and were both soon resting in sweet, refreshing sleep, which they so much needed after the excitement of the day, and yet more to bring physical strength for the more terrible struggle of to-morrow. But let no one fear that our little heroine will falter, let the trials impending be ever so great; for she is of the true type of our California pioneer women, of whom we are proud to think; for they are the glory of California's early history as an American State.

CHAPTER XXI.

A NOTE FROM CAPTAIN WARD—“A BOAT AHOY!”

Walter and Minnie arose early in the morning following their consultation in regard to the note, as related in the last chapter, and Walter started out at daybreak to see De Forest, before he left for home. He was only just in time to have a shake-hands, and to exchange good wishes, as the steamer shoved off.

“Tell Minnie,” said De Forest, in a whisper, “I will be here on the appointed day, if she does not call me sooner, through you, Walter.”

“All right, all right, James. God bless you and bring you back safe!”

And now the steamer was dashing out towards the Golden Gate. After they had passed out into the open sea, while De Forest was walking the quarter-deck, lost in his thoughts of Minnie, a sailor came up to him, saying:

“Excuse me, sir; is your name De Forest?”

“Yes; what do you want with me?”

“Oh, nothing, sir; but a gentleman gave me this letter and told me to give it to you before the steamer should leave the wharf; but I forgot it, sir.”

James took the letter, tore it open, and read in astonishment as follows:

FRIEND DE FOREST:—I know you are mortified at my having won, in the contest between us for the hand of a lovely girl, and I write this to assure you that I have no ill-will towards you, and, as you are an old friend of my wife, that is to be, I would be very glad if you would stay over just two days, and favor us with your company, on the occasion of the interesting ceremony which is to unite Miss Minnie Wagner and myself in bliss for life. If Minnie was near me while I write, I know she would join with me in this request. Hoping you will remain and favor us, I subscribe myself

Your obedient servant.

JOHN WARD.

600

As De Forest finished reading this note, he flung it on the deck and stamped on it, saying:

“You are a lying villain! What you write is false! Yes; as false as Satan is himself!”

Then he threw himself on the gunwale of the steamer, with his head resting against the main rigging, while over and over he exclaimed:

“Of course it is false! Of course there is not a word of truth in it! No; it is just written to annoy and worry me; but I don't mind it in the least, for I *know* it is false!”

Then he turned to look where the note yet lay on the deck, saying, as he reached for it:

“Let me see what the vile wretch does say; I almost forget already.”

Then he read it over carefully twice, and, while doing so, turned pale, and again red.

“I do not doubt Minnie. No; I cannot doubt her; but I fear some infernal plot against her; something that she has some knowledge of, but could not tell me without violating somebody's confidence. Oh, why did I not stay in San Francisco? Yet the villain expected me to get this note before the steamer left; so he does not fear my presence there. Oh, can or could there be any truth in it? Great Heavens! it is impossible! No, no; poor Minnie is the victim of some infernal plot! Oh, why am I not back in San Francisco? I will question the fellow who handed me the note; he may be in with this villain, Ward. I must get it all out of him.”

De Forest now put the letter in his pocket, and went to the Captain's office. The Captain invited him in, and, after some conversation, the Captain sent for the sailor who had handed the note to De Forest. The sailor appeared, and looked frightened. The Captain, showing him the letter he had given De Forest, said:

“I want to know the exact truth about this letter. Where did you get it? who gave it to you? and what did the person say when he gave it? Nothing but the truth will save you from trouble; so out with it!”

“Captain, I do not know the man who gave me the letter; but he paid me five dollars to hand it to this gentleman, and told me not to give it until we were outside the heads, but to tell the gentleman that I had forgotten to give it to him, as I was told to do, 601 before the steamer left the wharf. That is the truth, Captain; the same as if I was sworn to tell it. I know nothing of what is in the letter, and nothing but just as I have told you. And, if you wish, Captain, I will give up the five dollars I got for the job.”

“No, no,” said De Forest; “keep the five dollars; I am satisfied with your story, as you now tell it.”

So the sailor was dismissed, and De Forest, thanking the Captain, left to think over the matter under this new light.

“Ah!” said he, as he paced the quarter-deck, “I now see the fellow did not expect or wish me to stay in San Francisco. Oh, it must be that there is some infernal plot against Minnie; for, as to her every marrying that fellow, that is out of the question; she would die first; I have not a shadow of a doubt about that. Oh, I must get back in some way and somehow! Oh, God will save her! But my heart aches. I must get back. Oh, how can I do it? Yes, I will see the Captain; for I cannot endure this terrible uncertainty.”

So De Forest had another interview with the Captain of the steamer, which resulted in the Captain's agreeing to put him on board the first craft they met bound for San Francisco. Early the next morning they fell in with a vessel bound for San Francisco. She was the brig May Day, Marshal, master. De Forest was soon on board of her, and was politely received by both the Captain and his wife, whom he found to be a very agreeable lady. De Forest still continued in great anxiety of mind, but felt better satisfied, now that his face was turned towards Minnie, who, it appeared to him, was in some great trouble, contending against some terrible wicked plot of Ward's.

“Oh!” he would exclaim as he reflected on it, “when I saw her in such an agony of mind that night before I left, why did I come away? Oh, I fear I was selfish. Poor Minnie! Poor Minnie! can you ever forgive me?”

Then sometimes he would fall into deep thought, and Ward's terrible, wolfish eyes would gleam before him as plainly as he ever saw them. And then he would fancy he heard Minnie scream, and her cry would seem to come over the dark waters to him, calling for help, just as he heard her the night he saved her from Wild. Then he would leap to his feet and gaze all over the waters around him, so fearfully lonesome, and listen and listen, as if in fact he expected to hear Minnie's wild call for help to reach him. The wind seemed all ahead. The May Day labored hard, but made very poor progress. As every half-day passed, De Forest's imagination became more and more excited, and fashioned yet more terrible pictures to his vision of Minnie's necessity for help.

“Oh, why did I leave! Oh, why did I leave!” he constantly repeated, as he tried to overcome the increasing alarm that seemed to gather around his heart, in spite of himself. So passed the first, second and third days on board the May Day. Night closed in, and De Forest was in a feverish excitement. He tried to argue with himself of the absurdity of his fears and feelings; but he could not command calmness of thought or mind. He lay down in his berth to sleep, but his eyes and ears were nervously sensitive, and, if he but dozed, a frightful vision of Ward with Minnie in his power came with such vividness before him, that he would start up, sitting erect in his berth, covered with cold perspiration, repeating as he wiped it away:

“Oh, Minnie! Poor Minnie! why did I leave you? why did I leave you? Can you ever forgive me?”

Then he would lean his head over the side of his berth, and, peering with his eyes wide open through the darkness up the cabin hatchway, he would listen and listen, though his common sense told him he could hear nothing of her, who now so mysteriously haunted his imagination. As the first ray of the morning light appeared, De Forest left his berth, and now as he walked the quarter deck, he was yet feverish and almost wild with excitement. There was a dense fog on the sea, so that it was impossible to see any object twenty rods from the vessel. He suddenly stopped in his

walk, dropped his head to a listening attitude, and, laying his hand on the arm of the Captain, who happened to be passing, he exclaimed:

“Hark! Captain. Did you hear nothing?”

The Captain stopped, and listened also; but could hear nothing but the dashing of the waves around the brig

“What do you think you heard?” asked the Captain. “Not breakers, surely; for, by my reckoning—and I know my reckoning is all right—I am far out at sea, safe from all such dangers.”

“Oh, no, Captain; not breakers; but I thought I heard a loud, terrible cry, as if of some one calling for help; and,” continued De Forest, lowering his voice, “it seemed to me as if a woman's voice was there.”

603

“Oh, it must be imagination, Mr. De Forest; you do not look well. You slept badly, for I heard you groan two or three times, and my wife says you cried out loudly in your sleep. You had better take something to steady your nerves, Mr. De Forest. Suppose we have a glass of brandy? I have some that is very nice.”

“Oh, thank you, Captain, I am all right; I suppose it was a fancy; yet, strange, I heard it very plainly.”

“Well, Mr. De Forest, we cannot see any distance through this fog; but, as soon as ever it rises, we will take a good look all around; for, of course, many a poor fellow has been starved to death in an open boat before now.”

The breakfast bell rang, and De Forest followed the Captain to the table, swallowed two cups of coffee, one after the other, while scarcely eating anything, and then returned to the deck, which now

seemed to have a sort of fascination for him. Again he suddenly stops from his walk, and, throwing himself into the same listening attitude as before, he exclaimed:

“My God! I heard it again!”

“What was it like?” said the Captain.

“Oh, it seemed like a woman's cry for help. I am sure I heard it; I cannot be mistaken.”

“Well, Mr. De Forest, my ears are good sea-ears, and I heard nothing. However, the fog is clearing away; so we will soon see.”

The fog now raised, and the whole expanse of the sea was visible; but nothing appeared in sight.

De Forest still looked with intense excitement in all directions, and to satisfy him, more than from any lingering doubt that De Forest might be right, the Captain ordered a man up in the rigging with a glass in hand, telling him to take a careful look around the whole distance in sight. De Forest watched the sailor, as he slowly passed the glass around the horizon, as though his own life depended on the result. At length the sailor cried out:

“A boat ahoy!”

“A boat?” exclaimed the Captain and De Forest, in one breath.

“Yes; a boat with a red signal out, but nothing to be seen stirring. Aye, yes; something now moves in the bow of the boat.”

604

De Forest became as pale as death, as the sailor spoke, and, without saying a word, he turned his eyes on the Captain. The Captain understood him, and instantly called to the look-out:

“Hold the boat in view until I get the brig in the right course to overhaul her.”

“Aye, aye, sir,” came back from the look-out. In five minutes more the May Day was bearing down on the boat, now plainly in sight to all, and all saw a figure, like that of a man or boy, jumping up and down in the boat as if frantic with joy, and then a wild cry is heard by every one on the May Day. De Forest leans over the the side of the brig, his eyes fixed on the boat, his arms outstretched, unconscious of everything around him, saying all the time, he knew not why: “Poor Minnie! poor Minnie! why did I leave you? Oh, why did I leave you?”

CHAPTER XXII.

A VISIT TO FATHER MAGINNIS—CAPTAIN WARD'S PROPOSAL.

As soon as Walter returned from seeing De Forest off in the Oregon steamer, Minnie and he ate their breakfast, and then started arm-in-arm to see Father Maginnis. They found him as usual busily engaged about the asylum.

“Well, well,” said he, “what is it that brings you both here this morning, when you know how my time is taken up?”

The brother and sister did not mind this sort of reception, as they now understood the good man perfectly. They knew he was rough in manners, but kind in heart to overflowing.

“Can you give us half an hour of your time, Father?” said Walter.

“Half an hour; tut, tut! What do you want of so much? But go on, and I will stay, if I can, to hear you out; only be as quick as possible.”

Then Walter gave him a history of the robbery and the forged note, and of his present position. Father Maginnis kept his eyes on Walter the whole time he was speaking, as if he wanted to read every expression on his face. As Walter finished, he said:

“Why, you are very simple. If your story is true, and I believe it is, these fellows Ward and Brown have your lost gold; and if this note is a forgery, they have fixed the whole thing up to get more money out of you, or get some hold on you for some purpose.”

“Why, Father, I find it hard to think so badly of these men as that!”

“Tut, tut! There are bad men in the world, as well as good. Ward and Brown are the men who took your money, as sure as you are sitting there; and they are after something now, so look out for them; and, if I am right, they will try and get this note out of the bank before you can pay it. Then they will have a power over you that might give you great trouble.”

606

“Father, you surprise me, and the more so because sister Minnie here takes your view of the matter.”

Walter then explained that he had the Hilton notes, and all their new furniture, to secure the payment of the two thousand dollars, if he could find some one who had it to lend.

“Well, Walter, I will ask John Sullivan to let you have the money, and I think he will do it.”

Just then the bell rang, and Father Maginnis went to the door himself. It was some fifteen minutes before he reappeared. As he entered, he said:

“The person whom I have just let in is an old sea Captain of the name of Fitzgerald. He is a good man, and is rich, and has not much to do with his money but to live on it. He often lends me money when I want it for the asylum, so I have just asked him to lend you the two thousand dollars, and he says he will if I say so. I will bring him in, Walter, and let you speak to him yourself, as to how you propose to secure the money.”

“Thank you, Father; I will do so.”

So Father Maginnis called his visitor in, and introduced him to Walter and Minnie. He was a fine-looking old man, and seemed robust in health, and had a very benevolent countenance. Walter showed the Hilton notes, explained all about them, and gave Edmund Allen as reference as to Hilton's standing, and stated besides that he would store their piano at a warehouse, and give the warehouse receipt to the Captain as additional security. The Captain said he would not take the young lady's piano; but Father Maginnis said:

“Yes, Captain, you must, or I will not let you lend the money.”

So it was all settled, and Captain Fitzgerald agreed to call that afternoon at Allen Wheeler & Co.'s and make the necessary inquiry of them as to Hilton's standing; and if all was satisfactory, he promised to take up the note at the bank the first thing in the morning, and Walter gave him a written order on the bank for the note. Thanking Father Maginnis and the Captain both, they were about to leave, when Father Maginnis said:

“Come back here, Minnie, and sing some of those Irish songs you have for the Captain.”

Poor Minnie, she was not much in singing humor; but, with a bright smile, she said:

“Certainly, if the Captain would like to hear them.”

607

“Of course, Miss Minnie, I would like to hear a good Irish song at any time.”

So the Father led the way into the Sisters' Orphan Asylum parlor, where there was a handsome piano. The very fact that Minnie's heart was sad and anxious filled her fine voice now with the deepest melody. At the Captain's request, she sang some of Moore's beautiful songs, and others that the Captain called to her mind, concluding with the “Wearing of the Green.” The Captain seemed enraptured, and often had much to do to conceal his emotion. When Minnie had concluded, he took her hand to wish her good-bye, and, as he did so, said:

“Miss Minnie, have you any Irish blood in your family?”

“Oh, yes, Captain; my mother was born in Ireland, and I learned all those songs from her.”

“Why, Miss Minnie, you do not know what a strange feeling came over me while you were singing; for, when I was young, I had a dear sister who used to sing those very songs, and I could almost believe that you were she while you sat at the piano.”

The good Captain could not command his voice further, so he turned away. Father Maginnis, seeing the state of things, broke in with:

“Well, well; I have lost too much time; so be off with you all.” And, turning to Walter, he continued: “Be sure and not forget to send the warehouse receipt to the Captain; and, Walter, look out for those men I told you about.”

As Walter was about to answer, he exclaimed:

“Be off, I tell you; I have something else to do besides talking.”

The Captain now stepped up, and said:

“Mr. Wagner, you need not trouble yourself about the piano or warehouse receipt. I will not touch it, no matter what Father Maginnis here says. I know my own business, and I will not touch the warehouse receipt.”

Walter was about to remonstrate, but the Captain waved his hand, saying:

“No, no; I would even lend you the money without those notes, if that was necessary. Do not touch your sister's piano, or I will not lend the money.”

“Well, well,” said Father Maginnis, “let him have his own way. There is no managing an Irishman anyway. They are all as obstinate as mules. So be off!”

Captain Fitzgerald laughed, and said in a half-whisper to Minnie: "Father Maginnis was never obstinate himself, we all know, Miss Minnie."

Then Minnie again reached her hand to the Captain, saying with the sweetest smile:

"Will you not come and see us, Captain?"

"Thank you, my dear young lady. It will make me most happy to do so."

"Be off, be off!" shouted Father Maginnis. And so they parted.

As the brother and sister walked home, they were silent for a while. Then Minnie looked up into Walter's face, and he saw tears on her cheek, as she said:

"What a good, kind friend God has sent us! I feel so much encouraged, Walter, and so much more happy, now that we are almost sure of the payment of the note."

"Yes, dear Minnie; I understand your feelings perfectly, God is surely with us in our trouble."

As soon as they reached home, they found dinner ready, and enjoyed it with good appetites, feeling well satisfied with their morning's work. After dinner, Walter left to keep an appointment with John A. McGlynn, who was yet his warm friend, and was actively at work for him in efforts to get him once more in business. As he was leaving, he kissed Minnie, and said: "I am sorry, darling Minnie, that you are to be troubled with Ward; but I think he will try to act the gentleman and not press his suit after he finds it disagreeable to you."

Minnie remained sitting for a moment after Walter walked out; but, suddenly, a lonesome, almost frightened feeling came upon her, and she started up to recall Walter, and ask him not to go until after Ward had paid his announced visit; but, on reaching the street, Walter was nowhere to be seen. So, returning, she went into the kitchen and told Jane that she expected a visitor she did not like that

afternoon, and that while he was in the sitting-room, not to be far out of the way. Jane promised, so Minnie tried to compose herself as well as she could to go through the ordeal before her.

She had not long to wait. The bell rang, and Jane went to the door, and showed Captain Ward into the sitting-room. Up to this time Minnie had been shrinking and almost trembling in anticipation of the visit; but, now that she was called on to speak and to act, her true womanhood of character seemed to come to her at once. She was instantly calm, dignified and self-possessed, as much so as she ever was in her whole life. She entered the room, and Ward arose, saying, as he reached out his hand:

“Oh, Miss Minnie, I am so glad to see you.”

His voice was low and soft, and Minnie thought it trembled a little.

“Thank you, Captain,” was her only reply, and they both sat down.

Ward tried to enter into conversation on indifferent subjects, and Minnie did all she could to help him to do so, in a half-hope of leading him away from his intention as announced to Walter. After a few minutes of this sort of effort, Ward turned to Minnie, and suddenly said:

“Miss Minnie, I came to see you to-day, with your brother's consent, to speak to you on a subject that is life or death to me.”

He paused, and breathed hard. Minnie promptly said:

“Captain Ward, I would be sorry to believe that the result of any conversation with me would be of much consequence to you one way or the other.”

“Then Miss Minnie, you are totally mistaken, for I will be perfectly candid with you, and tell you what I had hoped you already knew; that I love you with the fiercest passion. You have a power over me no other woman ever had. Yes, Miss Minnie; our fates are linked together. Yes,” said he, moving close to her, while his large, dark eyes fell on hers; “I feel it in my whole system; my fate

is your fate. Yes, Miss Minnie; I loved you before I saw you. I now love you as no mortal man ever loved woman before. There is a mystery in it I do not pretend to understand.”

Minnie's eyes never flinched under his terrible gaze, and he continued:

“Oh, yes, Miss Minnie; our fates are linked together. You cannot live and reject me; I cannot live and be rejected by you. I have property in other lands, and gold and diamonds, all to place at your feet. I will swear to be your slave for life. I will humble myself to the dust, if you but reach out your hand and save me from the fate that is sure to befall me if you reject me.”

Minnie now, in a proud, almost commanding, voice, and with her eyes yet fixed on his with unfaltering steadiness, said:

“Captain Ward, save such extravagant talk for those who would be pleased to hear it. Your language, sir, is offensive to me, as it would be to any woman of common sense. Your fate is not linked to mine, nor mine to yours, thank God! I have never given you any encouragement, Captain Ward, that would authorize you to make those protestations to me, and I therefore hope that you will not renew them in any manner whatever; for they can result in nothing that is agreeable to either of us.”

Ward's eyes now sank away from hers, as in a low voice he said:

“I implore you not to scorn my love. It is wild and passionate; it is deep and fervent; and what I say is true, that my fate is linked to your life—yes, the lives of us both, as I see it, hangs on your answer.”

“Captain Ward, I again beg of you to desist from addressing me in that sort of language, or in any language on this subject. I have always tried to show you by my manner that I had no feeling or interest in common with you, and you should have spared me the necessity of being so plain with you.”

“Oh, you were always cold; but the colder you were the fiercer I became in my love. Yes; while you were cold, I was on fire. I will ask you now, Miss Minnie, in a respectful manner, the direct question, and beware how you answer me: Will you be my wife, Miss Minnie Wagner?”

“Never, while a sense of understanding, or life, remains.”

“And that is your unalterable answer?” said Ward, rising to his feet, while the tone of his voice changed from the humble, suing lover's to haughty boldness.

“Yes, sir; my answer now, and forever more.”

“Then I have to tell you, haughty Miss Minnie, that within two days you will change your haughty answer, or see your brother ignominiously condemned to State Prison for forgery.”

“Ah,” said Minnie, “then you are his accuser; I always thought so.”

“No, I am not; but Brown and another friend of mine desire me to say to you that, unless you marry me within the next two days, they will bring the matter before the authorities, and then there will be no escape for him.”

“Leave my presence, instantly, shameless villain!” said Minnie, rising to her feet, and confronting Ward with as bold a mien as though armed with physical strength and weapons that would command his obedience.

611

Ward looked at her a moment, as if uncertain what to do, then said:

“I give you one more chance to relent, and then, if you do not do so, it is not love that will pursue you any more.”

And as he said this, he stepped forward so as to bring his face close to her, while his eyes gleamed like a wolf's about to spring on its prey; his lips shrank back from his large, white teeth, while he hissed into her ear the last part of the sentence:

“No; it is not love any more. You have scorned that; but hate—the deadliest that ever prompted to blood or vengeance— *that* will now be on your track!”

Minnie, undaunted, looked more than her full height as she said:

“Coward, to threaten a woman! God is my shield, and I fear you not!”

“Oh, we will see; we will see. I tell you that you will crouch at my feet, and beg to be my wife, before you are two days older. Good-night, proud girl; we will soon meet again, and then—and *then, my time* comes to hear you cry for mercy.”

As he said the last words, he rushed from the house. Minnie walked after him with a firm step, she knew not why, exactly, and locked the door. As she returned, she met Jane coming into the sitting-room with a frightened look.

“Oh, Jane,” she said, “come and sit near me. I am trembling all over. That terrible man, or fiend, or whatever he is, has frightened me out of my senses! Oh! if you had seen him, Jane, when I rejected his offer. Oh, he looked like anything but a man!”

As Minnie spoke, she held Jane tightly by the arm, and, as they sat together, rested her head on her shoulder.

“Say some prayers, Miss Minnie, and you will get over it. Sure, that never fails me, and a poor girl, the likes of me, has often nothing else to comfort her, and God always somehow takes care of her.”

Now both were silent, and then Minnie's lips moved in obedience to Jane's suggestion, and tears stole down her cheeks. As Jane had predicted, courage had come back to Minnie, and, as she sat up and wiped her eyes, she said:

“Did you hear what passed, Jane?”

“Only the last part of it, Miss. As I came into the little entry I heard you say, so brave like, that you defied him, and 612 depended on God; and then I heard him threaten you so terribly, and almost defy God; and, if he had not gone away, I was just coming in to stand by you; and I had the big butcher-knife in my hand all ready, but God only knows if I could have used it, if he was to come at us.”

Minnie shuddered, as she said:

“Thank you, Jane; you are a brave girl.”

Now they both grew calm, and Jane resumed her work, preparing the evening meal, and Minnie busied herself in doing up some housework she had left undone in her hurry in the morning. She was startled, while thus engaged, by hearing a heavy, excited step on the front porch; the door flew open, and Walter stood before her, with an expression of excitement in his face she had never seen there in her life before. It was an expression of the fiercest and most uncontrolled anger.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WALTER AND WARD—CAUGHT IN A TRAP.

When Walter left Minnie to go to see John McGlynn, he was calmer in his mind than he had been at any time since the discovery of the matter of the forgery. He found John in accordance with the appointment, and had a long, friendly talk with him. He found him so willing to take an interest in his welfare that he at length said:

“I have made up my mind, Mr. McGlynn, to disclose to you the real cause of my present position, as I believe you will have faith in my truth, and, perhaps, you can the better help me when you know all; and then I begin to doubt men I have heretofore believed in without a shadow of a doubt. I have believed in them against my sister's judgment, and against the judgment of other friends. I would like to have your views in a confidential way.”

“Well, Walter, you must be your own judge. Two heads are better, the saying is, than one, even if one is a sheep's head.”

Then Walter gave John a full account of the robbery, the note indorsed by forgery and all, and about Father Maginnis getting Captain Fitzgerald to agree to take up the note. John said:

“Does that fellow, Ward, want your sister, Walter?”

“Yes; he is furiously attached to her, and got my consent to ask her to-day. I gave it, as I thought it the best way of ending the matter.”

“What view does your sister take of Ward?”

“Oh, she cannot endure the sight of him.”

“Well, said John, “I think the whole thing is very clear. This fellow Ward and his friend Brown are two confidence villains, working into each other's hands. I have seen them both, and there is nothing honest about either of them; they are both from Sydney, and the chances are that they are escaped convicts. They have all your money, and they now want your 614 sister. This is the view I take of it, Walter, and, though I may be mistaken, it will do you no harm to take my theory of the situation as the true one, and keep a sharp lookout for your sister's safety.”

“My God!” exclaimed Walter, “if you are right, Mr. McGlynn, I never should have given my consent to Ward's making a proposal to Minnie!”

“Oh, as to that, perhaps it was best that she should herself give him his dismissal.”

“Well,” said Walter, “I will at once go and throw myself in the way of those fellows, and see what I can make out of them.”

“Yes, do,” said John; “and be sure and keep cool. It is your only chance of discovering their plots and plans. I will call to-morrow afternoon at your house, if you wish, and we will compare notes, and may be we can trap the rascals in some way yet. Anyway, I will try and help you work the case up; and I am glad you told me all, for I think I see daylight for you not far ahead.”

As Walter walked along Montgomery street, intending to go to the Oriental Hotel, he reflected on all the incidents of the robbery, and of his whole connection with Ward, from the first day he met him in Downieville, and light seemed to dawn on many heretofore unaccountable circumstances, and the conviction forced itself on his mind that McGlynn was right in his theory of the whole thing. Just as he came to this conclusion, he looked up, and there stood Ward, directly in front of him, apparently waiting for his approach. Walter's brow knit into almost a frown in spite of himself, as he acknowledged Ward's salute.

“Wagner,” said Ward, “I would like to see you in my room. Have you any objection to coming with me?”

“None,” said Walter, in a more formal manner than he had ever used when speaking to Ward before. And, without uttering further words, they walked down Bush street, and were soon in Ward's handsome room, at the Oriental Hotel. Ward threw himself into an easy chair, and pointed out a seat to Walter, saying:

“Please be seated, for I have an important communication to make to you.”

Walter took the seat Ward indicated, without saying a word; but his eyes were fixed on Ward with almost sternness. Ward avoided Walter's look, as he commenced:

“Friend Walter, you may observe that I am a little excited; and, perhaps, you think it is because your sister has just scorned the love and devotion I laid at her feet; as, of course, she did this with your full knowledge that she was to do it, and, I suppose, your approval.”

This sort of a way of opening the conversation was offensive to Walter, and seemed to arouse him; for he now sat erect, and looked full in Ward's face, with an angry expression, as he said:

“Go on, sir.”

Ward, still averting his look from him, continued:

“I was saying, Wagner, that you might suppose it was because of this contemptuous treatment I was excited; but you are mistaken, if you think so. I am excited entirely on your account, as you shall hear; though, by your manner and look, I see very little friendship for me on your part this morning; but never mind, I will act the friend to you, if you will let me, in this great difficulty you are in.”

“I do not understand, Captain, what you are driving at. Please be explicit, and you will find me no less so.”

“Oh, you do not understand me, Mr. Walter Wagner,” said Ward, rising from his seat, and commencing to pace up and down the room, while his voice grew bitter and contemptuous in its tone. “You do not understand, sir, that in the eyes of the law you are a forger, sir, and that if I—yes, I—do not reach out my hand to help you, you will very soon wear the uniform of San Quentin. Do you understand that, Mr. Walter Wagner? Say ‘Yes’ or ‘No!’”

Walter was held silent by a rushing tide of passion that almost blinded him, and Ward went on:

“Oh, that is a new light to you, is it? Well, I have to tell you plainly that Brown, and Jack Lawson, the first mate of my vessel, both know of your unfortunate position, and they both declare that in the State Prison you shall go, or perhaps to the merciful protection of the Vigilance Committee,

with Sam Brannan at its head, if your sister Minnie does not marry me tommorrow—yes, to-morrow.”

And now as Ward said this, he seemed to lose all control of himself, and ran on, in a sort of wild fury, never once looking towards Walter, whose eyes he could not summon courage to meet, and Walter yet listened in silent fury as Ward continued:

“Yes; and as I have gone so far, I will say to you that I have 616 another hold, you do not know of, over your sister, or will have it soon; and I tell you she may as well marry me like an honest girl, for if she does not, before two days she shall flutter at my feet and beg for marriage.”

Just as these last words came from Ward's lips, his eye caught the sight of Walter reaching for a bowie-knife that hung in a belt on the wall, and his ear caught a sound coming from Walter like the stifled yell of a man in a fit. The truth flashed on him in an instant, and, without a look towards Walter, he made one bound for the door, and cleared it, just as the knife in Walter's hand passed close to his back, and was broken in the panel of the door, as it lay back against the wall. In two bounds more Ward cleared the long flight of stairs, with Walter just one bound behind him, with the broken knife yet in his hand. As quick as a flash, Ward brought the outside door to, and turned the key in the lock. The lock was a large-sized one, and at first resisted Walter's terrible wrench, but yielded to his second furious effort, and he leaped on the street in front of the hotel, but Ward was nowhere in sight. As Walter looked all around, he said, half-aloud: “Oh, you miserable fiend, you shall not escape me in this way! I will go home and see that my dear, darling Minnie is all safe; then I will get my own revolver and bowie-knife, and this wretch shall not live another day to repeat this vile language in regard to my angel sister!”

So on he almost ran, until he reached his cottage, when he threw open the door and stood before Minnie, almost insane with the passion of revenge. Minnie stood before him, calm; but she turned deadly pale as she observed the fearful excitement of Walter's look and manner.

“Oh, thank God, you are safe, my darling!” he exclaimed, as he threw his arms around her. Kissing her forehead and then both her cheeks, he continued:

“Oh, yes, you are safe; and you shall remain so, Minnie darling; so do not be afraid, and look so pale. Oh, he shall pay for what he said! Yes; dared to say to me of you, Minnie! I will not tell you, Minnie, what he said. No, no; for the wretch is to pay for it with his life! Yes, Minnie, with his life! This very night shall shut down on his dead body, and this is the hand!” Here he raised his right arm and shook it with a fierce gesture, while the other was yet around Minnie's waist. “Yes, Minnie; there is the arm that shall avenge the insult! I care not 617 that he has proved a robber, a thief, or that vile thing—a false friend! No; I care not for all that; but he has dared to threaten you with a vile threat, darling sister; so, for this, he is to die to-night! Yes; and no other man shall dare to rob me of the pleasure of putting the vile thing that he is out of the world! So, darling Minnie, do not be afraid any more. I will soon be back, for it will not take me long to find the wretch!”

As he spoke, he withdrew his arm from Minnie, and, walking to where his belt, with knife and revolver, hung, he took them down and buckled them on his waist.

While Walter was addressing Minnie in this wild manner, she held his arm grasped tightly with both hands. She still held it as he armed himself, while trembling in every limb. Now, with quivering lips, she exclaimed:

“Walter, my darling brother, what can all this mean? Do not, I beseech you, Walter, harbor such terrible feelings of revenge. If this man has made a vile threat, do not let that turn you into a revengeful murderer. Let him go; we will both in the future avoid him, and God will save us from his threats, as sure as there is light at noonday.”

“Oh, Minnie, do not talk to me in that way. You are often right; but you cannot, as a woman, understand this case. Oh, no, Minnie; oh, no, he has dared to insult my darling pet.” And here again he threw his arm around her, and, looking down on her with the tenderest, compassionate love, as he continued: “Yes; he has insulted my darling, sweet sister, that all her life has stood close to me in

every trouble, whether as a boy at school or a man in the world, always sacrificing herself for me! But I will avenge the insult dearly, as it is my duty to do! Yes, Minnie; my duty!” And now Walter's words were slow and distinct, and in a low tone, he continued: “I will strike this wretch down on sight, like the wolf that he is. I will then cut his false, vile heart from his body, and throw it to some dog to devour, and then I will kill the brute that holds a thing so vile!”

Minnie was now terribly alarmed for the state of Walter's mind, and, summoning all the powers of her noble womanhood to aid her in the struggle she saw before her, she turned to her brother, and standing erect, laid a hand on each of his shoulders, as she exclaimed in a voice of the sweetest entreaty, and yet of decision and firmness:

“Walter, my darling brother, calm yourself; calm yourself, 618 my darling brother. Do not for a moment harbor in your breast those murderous intentions. I tell you, my brother, it is the arch fiend himself who is urging you on to your own and my destruction.”

Walter shrank from his sister's look, and, turning away, he said:

“Your destruction, Minnie! Your destruction! Oh, Minnie! how can you speak so? What do I care for myself in comparison to my love for you? Your safety and your honor have been threatened, Minnie; and reproach me not that, in defiance of all the world, I go to strike down the man who has dared to make the threat!”

Poor Minnie! this day had tested the strength of every nerve in her system, and every faculty of her mind, and well had they stood it up to this point. As Walter now turned away with words of half-reproach, her arms suddenly started out to him; but she could not move, and an expression of almost agony appeared on her face as she struggled for words. Walter marked the silence, and, turning, raised his eyes; then his arms were outstretched, too, and, for an instant of time, each, with quivering lips, gazed in the other's face; then, a wild cry from poor Minnie, and they are locked in each other's arms.

“Oh, darling brother,” Minnie exclaimed, in a voice choked with sobbing and hysterical weeping, “you will not leave your poor Minnie to do this terrible act which God forbids! No, no; you will not leave her all alone here in California to be pointed at in shame, and with no power to defend her darling Walter's good name. Father gave me to you; mother sent me to you! Oh, Walter, will you blacken our honored name, and leave your darling Minnie, that could not live without your love, to wither and die in shame?”

While Walter struggled for a voice to answer, Minnie's form became heavy in his arms; her hands dropped from around his neck, her head fell back, and she was still, lifeless, and as white as if dead.

“Great Heavens!” he exclaimed, “I have killed her! Oh, merciful God, forgive me, forgive me! and, oh, save my sister, and I will with humility bear the insults of the whole world!”

And, as he spoke and prayed, he laid her on the sofa, and called loudly for Jane. Rushing in, Jane loosened Minnie's dress, and did all that was possible to restore her, while Walter knelt, praying for forgiveness and mercy. Minnie's faint was heavy and long, but at length her color began to come back.

“All is right, Mr. Wagner,” said the girl; “she is coming to nicely.”

Then Walter poured out his thanks to the Giver of all good, and renewed the promises he made while in the agony of his fright. He seated himself near Minnie, took her hand in his, and, kissing it, retained it. Minnie opened her eyes, and sadly smiled as she looked at her brother; then she shut them again, and remained some minutes perfectly quiet. Again she opened her eyes and said:

“I fear I frightened you, poor Walter. I recollect now what happened. What a weak thing I was to give way; but it came on me so suddenly.”

Walter's whole manner was changed, as he said:

“Minnie, it was not half so strange as the fit I had on me; but it is all over, thank God! I see now clearly what a blind, furious passion I had been plunged into by the sudden discovery of that man's villainy, and of his terrible language about you; but, as always, you saved me, Minnie. Yes; saved us both. I believe I could now meet that wretch of a man with perfect composure.”

Minnie, without speaking, reached out her arm, and, slipping it gently around her brother's neck, drew him down to her, and fondly kissed him. Now, as Minnie remained cuddled up on the sofa, Walter retained his seat near her, and they talked over their position, and Walter repeated his interview with John McGlynn, which very much pleased Minnie. He then told, in a calm, quiet way, all that had passed with Ward, and they both wondered what Ward could have meant by saying that he would soon have another hold over Minnie.

“Oh,” said Walter, “I think it is but an idle boast. However, be careful, Minnie, and do not go out alone until we get the fellow completely exposed.”

“I think you are right, Walter; for, you know, he threatened me in much the same manner before he saw you. But, with good John McGlynn's help, I think we will be able to expose him. And do you know, Walter, that Isaac Hilton and I always believed that it was Ward who instigated that man to try to murder James De Forest?” And Minnie shuddered as she spoke.

620

Walter remained in thought for some minutes, and then said: “I can now believe anything of him, and the more I look back the more light seems to come to me. I recollect, too, that one day I strolled into Ward's room, and was surprised at seeing, written across a paper folded like a bill of items, the name ‘John Ward Cameron Lusk.’ I recollect the name well, on account of ‘Lusk’ being a part of it. Ward saw that I read the indorsement, and, taking up the paper, whatever it was, said: ‘I was trying my pen with all the odd names I could string together, and the last I thought of, as you see, is the name of De Forest's enemy. He ought to be in port soon, and arrangements are made to nab him the moment his vessel arrives.’ Then he went to the stove, and threw the paper into the fire. So, at the

time, I thought nothing more about it; but now it is a circumstance to strengthen Hilton's and your suspicions, and I will draw McGlynn's attention to it to-morrow."

Jane now appeared, with a cup of tea for Minnie.

"Oh, thank you, Jane," said Minnie, as she sat up and took the cup; "that is just what I was wishing for."

"I believe I will take one also, Jane," said Walter, "just to keep Miss Minnie company."

Jane looked pleased, and brought Walter his cup. As they sipped their tea, they enjoyed each other's company until Jane announced the evening meal. As they left the tea-table, a gentleman and lady called to see about their daughter's taking music lessons. Minnie, with pleasure, accepted the new pupil, and was very much pleased at the call, as it helped to calm herself and Walter, and restore them to their usual current of thought and feeling. The visitors seemed very much attracted by the brother and sister, and extended their visit until bedtime. After the visitors left, the brother and sister, as was their habit, joined in their devotions; and on that night, instead of the usual kiss at parting, Walter threw his arms around his sister and kissed her over and over. Without a word being spoken on either side, except the low-murmured "God bless you, darling!" from each to the other, they parted for the night. There was an undefined fear lingering around Minnie's heart, most likely from Ward's threats. After turning from side to side for half an hour, she arose from her bed, lit her lamp, and went to Jane's room. She asked her to come and sleep with her, and Jane at once complied. Minnie's nerves grew quiet, and she fell asleep; but her slumber was terribly uneasy. In her dreams, her father and mother were again near her. They were, she thought, leaning over her, and both were weeping and looking with pity and sorrow at her. "Oh, darling father and mother, why do you weep?" she said. "Poor Minnie!" they answered; "we cannot help it; for to-morrow will be to you a day of horror such as you have not yet known, and we come once more to remind you that your safety and Walter's safety depend on your full and unwavering reliance in God. He alone can save you. Courage, Minnie, courage!"

Minnie started up in her sleep, and called aloud: "Mother! father! kiss me! bless me!"

Jane now started up, saying: "Miss Minnie, you must have had a terrible dream!"

"Oh, yes, Jane, I had. Please join me in some prayers," and Minnie was trembling in every limb, "that I may have courage and be a woman; for surely something terrible is coming upon me."

"Oh, Miss, do not let dreams frighten you so. You know we must not mind dreams. They are all foolishness."

"No, no, Jane; I do not mind dreams, but yet I am frightened; and surely there is no harm in praying to God to strengthen me, if harm *does* come."

"Oh, no; of course not, Miss Minnie."

And, as always, her prayers seemed answered, and courage and confidence were restored to her. For the remainder of the night, she slept soundly, and arose in the morning strengthened and refreshed. Walter, too, felt composed, and willing to meet any trouble that might come with cool courage. This was soon tested. As the banking hour approached, he thought it best to go and see Captain Fitzgerald, to make sure that he would take up the note the moment the bank opened.

"Good-bye, dear Minnie," said he; "I will be back in a little while. I am only going to Captain Fitzgerald's and will come directly back. If that villain, Ward, should call on any pretence, do not let him in, or show yourself, and do not leave the house until I come."

On receiving Minnie's assent, Walter took his way to Stockton street, where Captain Fitzgerald lived. He had not gone more than a block when he observed two men following him. He put back his hand to see if his revolver was all right in place, 622 and then waited until they came up. As they neared him, he recognized them to be the two policemen to whom Ward had introduced him the morning after the robbery of Ward's safe.

“Good-morning, Mr. Wagner,” said one of the men.

Walter returned his salutation, saying:

“What is new, boys?”

“Oh, nothing, Mr. Wagner; but we have an unpleasant duty to perform.”

“And what is that?” said Walter, a little startled.

Then the fellow acting as spokesman explained that they had a warrant for his arrest on the charge of forgery, and, on Walter's asking on whose complaint the warrant was issued, he was told on that of Macondray & Co. He then said he would go with them, but that he wished first to go back to his own house to inform his sister. This they positively refused to let him do. Then he said he wanted them to take him first to the law office of Hall McAllister. This they also refused, saying their instructions were positive to take him to the County Prison direct, and that from there he could send for any one he wanted to see. They then asked him for his revolver, which he unbuckled from his waist and handed over. They continued along Stockton street west, until they reached the corner of Broadway. Then, just as they were apparently turning towards the prison, a boy stepped up to them, and, addressing the policemen, said:

“The Chief wants you to bring your prisoner to the blue cottage on Telegraph Hill, where he can stay until he gets his bail bonds.”

“Aye, aye,” said the policemen.

Then turning to Walter, he said:

“I suppose the Chief wants to spare you from going to the common jail until you get your bonds. That is all.”

There was a confused idea in Walter's mind that something was wrong. So he stopped short, and said:

“I demand to see your warrant before I stir another foot, and I have some doubts as to your being policemen.”

“Oh, you doubt us, do you? Well, here is the warrant, all in due form. And look here,” said the policeman, as he threw open his coat and displayed the city police star on his breast. “Do you now doubt, Mr. Wagner?”

Walter read the warrant for his arrest over, and could see nothing wrong about it. So, without further words, he resumed 623 his walk between the two policemen, who did not stop until they reached Robert Wells & Co.'s rickety blue shanties, on the southwest side of Telegraph Hill. They entered one of them, and the door was locked behind them. Walter found himself in the presence of Brown, with four or five villainous-looking men lounging around, with pistols and bowie-knives dangling in their belts. No one appeared to notice Walter's presence but Brown, who addressed Walter, saying:

“Oh, Wagner, I am sorry for your trouble, I assure you; but Captain Ward will be here soon, and will, he tells me, propose a way of settling this disagreeable business.”

Walter now comprehended his position.

“I see I am the victim of Ward's and your villainous treachery, which may end in my death and that of my sister; but, in that event, I have the satisfaction of knowing that the world is not large enough for you and your cowardly villains to hide yourselves in; for my countrymen will pursue you by land and sea, until they avenge our fates.”

“Wagner, the time to talk that stuff has passed. So I advise you to take things coolly. I have nothing whatever to say to you. My duty is to keep you safe until Captain Ward comes, and to do that I will

have to request you to let these men put those irons on,” pointing, as he spoke, to a pair of shackles and handcuffs lying on the floor.

“Villain, you dare not!” said Walter, as he threw himself into an attitude of defence, with his back to the wall.

In an instant, half a dozen revolvers were aimed at his body. Brown gave a chuckling laugh, as he said:

“Do you want to die right now, Wagner, or wait to have a talk with Ward? You can do just as you prefer, my dear sir. Those irons will go on, or you die now, sure.”

“If I were alone in the world, I would die right here in a fight with you and your Sydney hounds, but —”

“You have no need to finish the sentence, Wagner, I know what you would say, and your conclusion is a correct one; you wish to live to save your sister, if possible. Boys, put the irons on.”

Two of the ruffians laid their revolvers aside, took up the irons and fastened them on Walter's legs and wrists. While this was doing, Walter made no resistance whatever, not even speaking; but seemed lost in thought. Brown then turned to his men and said:

624

“Put up your revolvers, boys.”

And all obeyed, and resumed their former crouching positions around the room.

“Wagner,” said Brown, “if you were not such a powerfully-built man, I would have spared you this indignity; but Ward is now in a game that will not allow us to run the least risk; so you must excuse us.”

“Miserable, cowardly, treacherous wretch, do not again dare to address me a word! I would rather be here in ignominious irons, in the power of murderers and robbers like yourself and Ward, than to be either of you and free, a thousand, a thousand times!”

“Oh, that is all a matter of taste, Wagner; but I advise you to keep hard names to yourself, and act more patiently.” And again Brown laughed.

Walter turned away, and seated himself near a window. He remained gazing out, in anxious and terribly mournful thoughts of Minnie.

“Oh! what if they seize her in the house!” he kept repeating to himself. “They might kill the hired girl, and no one would hear Minnie's screams.”

And now he recollected Minnie's warning words: “Never to lose confidence in God.” So with his whole heart he implored God for her safety, asking nothing for himself. Now he sees a hack winding slowly up the hill, in the direction of the blue cottages. His heart leaps with convulsive terror, he knows not why. Brown has observed the hack also, and, turning to Walter, says:

“Wagner, prepare yourself for a surprise; for that hack, if I am not much mistaken, contains your sister!”

Walter leaped to his feet, and, raising his shackled arms above his head, struck them with all his force against the cottage wall, exclaiming:

“Great, merciful God! guard and save her!”

“Not a hair of her head shall be harmed,” said Brown, “if you and she comply with an honorable proposition Captain Ward will make you this evening on board the Blue Bell; for now we have to be off there.”

Walter groaned, as he said:

“I told you, villain, not to speak to me!”

His eyes remained riveted on the carriage. It now neared the rickety cottage steps. Brown threw open the door, saying:

“Here, Wagner, take a seat by your sister; there is not a 625 moment to lose! Here, you fellows; help Mr. Wagner to the hack. Take an arm each, and hold him up while he goes down the steps.”

As Walter hobbled down, thus supported, his heart sank within him, for he hears a suppressed cry of agony from the carriage.

“Darling Minnie,” he exclaims; “how did the villains deceive you, so as to get you into their power?”

“Oh, dear Walter, did you not send for me? Did you not write this?” handing Walter a note as she spoke.

“Oh, Minnie, it is a vile, wicked forgery!”

“In with you!” cries Brown, laughing. “You can talk over that matter with your sister in the carriage.”

In Walter was helped, or thrust; Brown and two of his gang taking seats in the hack also. Down the hill they now dashed, until they reached the beach, where Meiggs' wharf was afterwards built; then along the shore, westward, they drive, until they come to a little cove, where a boat and four men were found, evidently waiting for them. Minnie and Walter were hurried into the boat, and, just as they were ready to shove off, Brown said:

“Now, Wagner, it is my duty to tell you, that if you or your sister cry out while we are passing either ship or boat, I will order you gagged in the roughest way. And if I should fail in that, I will

not hesitate to have you shot dead in your seats, for we are engaged in no child's play now, you understand?" Then he continued to the driver of the carriage:

"Tom, return that carriage to Orrick Johnson's stable, on Kearny street, and answer no questions as to where you have been; and then send Johnny Lucky to the Captain, and let him tell the Captain that all worked to a charm—the warrant for arrest, and his note to the lady; and that we have gone on board all right." To the crew of the boat he then gave the order:

"Shove off, my lads, and give way!"

As the boat shot out into the bay, Minnie sat close to Walter, with one arm around his waist, and the other crossing his breast, her hand resting on his opposite shoulder. While thus fondly holding him, she looked up into his face, her eyes burning bright with the light of faith and hope, as she whispered:

"Courage! darling; courage! God is near us in His almighty power, and will not fail us if we trust Him with unfaltering faith."

CHAPTER XXIV.

MISS SCOTT AND LIZZIE—THE STRUGGLE.

Let us be lookers-on for an hour or so in Miss Scott's highly respectable boarding-house. Miss Scott, a most estimable maiden lady, with the true American spirit of enterprise, came, late in life, to San Francisco, in the eventful days of which we write, and opened a fashionable boarding-house on Montgomery street. She was good-hearted and kind in her disposition, made many friends in her new home, and was more than usually successful in the sort of enterprise she undertook.

We now stand in the entry of her nicely-furnished house, the evening of the day before Walter and Minnie were kidnaped, as related in the last chapter. It is candle light, and after the evening meal Miss Scott, as it should appear, was just closing a conversation with a nice-looking young English girl. It is hard to judge with certainty, as we look at this young person, whether she is a young

married lady, or an unmarried young lady; but a lady judge would say she was the former. She is in fine health, and has a very interesting expression on her handsome face. Miss Scott says:

“I am sorry, Miss Lawson, to press the matter, because I never had a boarder I liked better than yourself; but three of my lady boarders have drawn my attention to the matter, and I can no longer be blind to the fact that Captain Ward should fulfill his promise to you, and have the marriage ceremony openly acknowledged by him, or that you should find a new boarding-house. You say he is coming here to-morrow. Tell him what I say, and he will undoubtedly come to a conclusion. Tell him if there is one day's more delay about it, that I will send for your father and brothers, and request them to find you a new boarding-house; for I am too poor, Miss Lawson, to be able to run any risk about the character of my boarding-house.” With trembling, quivering lips, and in a very low voice, Miss Lawson answers:

627

“Well, Miss Scott, I will do as you say; but, dear Miss Scott, do not let them talk badly of me; it almost kills me to hear such things as you have to-day told me of. To-morrow I will either show you the certificate of marriage, or I will quietly change my boarding-house.”

And Lizzie, raising her handkerchief to her eyes, and sobbing audibly, entered her room. Lizzie Lawson had always the best of everything in Miss Scott's boarding-house; she had a nice parlor, or sitting-room, of her own, besides a snug bed-room, both on the first floor of the house; all of which was regularly paid for in advance by her father. She now passed through her little sitting-room into her bed-room, and, throwing herself into a chair, seemed for awhile in an agony of grief. Then she drops into deep thought, and seems to grow more calm. After awhile, she arose, bathed her face, and took pains to arrange her toilet properly. She has made up her mind not to join the other lady boarders for that evening, in the parlor, as she had always done heretofore. So she threw herself into a chair, and took a book to read. But this was a failure, for she could not understand one word she read. So, laying her book down, she is lost in thought. Now, she starts; for she hears the front door bell ring. In a moment more a knock comes on her sitting-room door. She knows the knock well,

and flies to the door to admit her father. He is dressed in his best, as he always is when he comes to see Lizzie.

“Father,” she says, in a deep, soft voice, as she draws him in by the hand she has caught in both of hers. She closes the door, and then flings both arms around his neck and whispers, as she kisses his hard, brown cheek over and over:

“Darling, darling father! I am glad you came.” The old seaman's arms clasped her close, as he says, in a low, but half alarmed voice:

“Is anything the matter with my little Lizzie? Has any one dared to harm my little queen?”

“No, dear father; but I am so glad you came, I don't know exactly why, but I am so glad.” And, as they are both seated on the sofa, she kisses him and again clasps his great, huge frame, in her delicate, white arms, while she lets her head rest on his bosom. Lizzie, though always kind and affectionate to her father when they met, had never been so demonstrative before, and Jack had always considered his daughter so far above himself in 628 education, religion and social standing, that he seemed happy in just standing at a distance, looking up to her in admiration, while he loved her to almost worship. He was proud of her for being so far above himself in everything, and seldom went to see her, fearing that he might, in some way, drag her down to his own humble level. As they are seated now, he feels that he is the great oak, and she the frightened bird, seeking shelter from some real or fancied impending storm.

“Tell me, Birdie,” he said, “who has frightened my little craft so that it runs into this rough harbor for shelter?”

“Yes, dear father,” she said, smiling sadly; “the harbor might be rough to a craft that did not know it and had no pilot to steer it in, but here is the pilot of your little craft.” And, as she spoke, she laid her hand on her heart, “and to-night I but obey the helm in that pilot's hands when I run into this harbor for shelter; for oh, dear father, something tells me that to-morrow will be for me a storm from daylight until dark, that is to decide my fate in this world!”

“Strange, Birdie, why you should have such thoughts; but one thing is sure, what decides your fate decides mine also. But tell me, Birdie,” and now a dark, uneasy look came in Jack's face as he spoke, “why do you fear, and what do you fear?”

Lizzie did not at once answer; but, wiping the moisture from her forehead with her handkerchief, she seemed trying to collect her thoughts. Then she said:

“Does the Blue Bell sail to-morrow, father?”

“Yes, of course Birdie; but surely the Captain has told you, and—”

“He has told me nothing, father, and has not been to see me for ten days.”

“Ha!” said Jack, rising to his feet, with his clenched right hand lifted, as if to strike, “does he dare to think that he can slight—but no, no, he cannot; for, Birdie, I would tear him limb from limb, if he did, and he must know that I would.”

“Dear father, be calm. Sit by me, and advise me.”

“Yes, Birdie, I will; and let me ask you now, has he never asked you to be his wife?”

“Asked me, father!” exclaimed Lizzie, in sudden excitement. “Oh, yes; over and over again. And when I consented, I wanted to tell you and the boys, but he would not let me, and made me promise not to tell you or the boys; and then he was so kind, and said he loved me so that he could not keep away from me.” Now Lizzie laid her hand on her father's shoulder, and rested her head against his breast, with her face averted, as she proceeded in a low voice: “Then one day, he got me to go with him on my knees and swear to be his wife, and he swore that he was my husband forever more. Oh, do not blame me, father. I believed him, and he promised to bring the Rev. Mr. Vermeyr to perform the ceremony, and then he did not bring him, and put me off, on one excuse or another, from day to day; and then he staid away for days and days, and got angry when I spoke about Mr. Vermeyr, and said if I bothered him so, he would not come back; and then he staid whole weeks

away. And, oh, father, I am so unhappy, and was so frightened to-night, for Miss Scott told me that if Captain Ward did not marry me at once, I must find another boarding-house.”

As Lizzie ceased to speak, she covered her face with both of her hands, and gave way to a fit of uncontrolled weeping. Jack clasped her in his arms, exclaiming:

“Birdie, darling, do not cry in that way. It is all my fault. The boys warned me, but I would not believe them.” Then in a husky, low voice, he added: “The parson shall come tomorrow, and the ceremony shall be performed, or the sharks will fight for his body in the bay. This I swear to you, my poor Birdie.”

“Oh, father, I do not want that, for—for he may yet do right, as I got a note from him to-day, saying he would be here to see me to-morrow morning.”

“Oh! then he wrote to you that he would be here to-morrow, did he, Birdie? That looks better, and as you say, he may do right yet. Yes, yes; it must be that he intends to bring the parson with him, for he dare not take the Blue Bell out of the Heads, if you do not walk the quarter-deck his wife, and queen of our ship. So, have courage, Birdie; all may yet be right, and the boys and I will see you through.”

Lizzie now grew more calm, and Jack walked up and down the little parlor, as if in thought of all he had heard; and sometimes there was a terrible, fierce expression on his countenance. At length he stopped, and, turning to Lizzie, he said:

“I tell you, Birdie, I will not let the boys know this, until after you see the Captain, to-morrow, and then, if all goes right, we will never tell them.” Then Jack leaned his head down 630 to wards Lizzie's, and in a slow, measured voice, continued: “But, if he fails you, they shall know all, and then it will be better for him if he had never been born!”

“Well, dear father, to-morrow will decide all; I did love him once, but now some way I have a terrible fear of him, but I may be wrong, and he may be all right yet; but to-morrow will decide, as I

said before. So come, dear father, in the afternoon, and bring the boys with you, for I so long to see them.”

“All right, Birdie, I will, I will; and now you must have courage, and when you are talking to the Captain you must be bold and plain with him; and recollect that you have a father and brothers who will stand by you to the last. And here,” continued Jack, taking from his belt a beautiful ivory-handled dagger, sheathed in a red morocco case, mounted with gold, “I bought this for you to wear when you were installed queen of our ship, but you may as well take it now, for it is not out of place with any lady here in a new country.” As Lizzie eagerly reached for the dagger, her hand slightly trembled, and her cheek grew a little pale. She laid it on the table, saying:

“Thank you, father; it is beautiful.” Then, seeing that Jack was preparing to leave, she said: “Have you to go so soon, father?”

“Yes, Birdie; I am going on board the Blue Bell to-night, for I do not want the Captain to know I was here.”

“Well, good-night, darling father,” said Lizzie, in a low, half-faltering voice, as she laid her hand on his shoulder, “and—and—well, I just wanted to say, that if anything did happen, you know, to either of us, so that—so that we never did happen to meet again, you know,” and now both her arms were around the old man's neck, and her lips were close to his ear, as she went on: “I want to tell you that you must never think that I did not love and thank you, every day of my life, for all your hard work for me to make me happy, and that with my last breath I will bless and pray for you. I could not let you go, darling father, to-night, without telling you this; but do not mind, for all may be well yet, you know.” The old man tried to control his voice to speak, but something choked it down, and he could not utter a word. “Do not fear for me, darling father, and feel so badly,” Lizzie murmured, while floods of tears ran down her cheeks. “Your Birdie will be brave; so do not fear. This horrid fear that haunts me to-night will pass away, and, when you 631 come to-morrow, you will find me the same as always, you know. So, good-night, darling father, and take care of yourself, for my sake.”

Not a word could Jack utter; one long, silent embrace, and he was making his way towards the city front, where the boat of the Blue Bell was awaiting him. As Lizzie now stood alone, near the table, with the dagger drawn from its sheath in her hands, there was a strange, bitter smile in her face, as she touched her finger to its sharp, needle-like point. Then, with a start, as if some horrid thought had crossed her mind, she returned it to its case, and hurriedly thrust it into the drawer of her work-table. Then she walked up and down the room with folded arms, in deep thought, saying to herself:

“Yes; he may only be trying me, and all may go right yet, as father says. Oh! merciful God, grant it!”

Poor Lizzie little knew that she prayed to be allowed to share a merciless pirate's life. A fate a thousand and a thousand times worse than the worst of deaths. As she continued to walk, she thought aloud:

“I will be calm, and give him no excuse. I will coax, will beg; and if he but openly acknowledges me his wife, I will not care what comes then. I am so glad that father came. Now that he knows all, I feel so much better. And I have wished him good-bye, too, if anything should happen. Oh, yes; I feel so much better!”

The night was now well advanced, and Lizzie, after her usual devotions, retired to her bed. For long hours she slept a deep, heavy sleep, as one does whose mind has been overtaxed with some absorbing grief or trouble. When she awoke, it was one of San Francisco's pleasantest days. The sun shone brightly into her little bedroom and parlor. A moment's thought recalled to her mind everything; the terrible struggle before her and all. But now her true English courage was in her heart to face it, and, when she appeared at the breakfast table, she seemed to Miss Scott, and to all, just the same as usual. After breakfast she returned to her room, and made herself busy in putting everything in the neatest order. She then took uncommon care in making her toilet, evidently anxious to look her very best. When all was completed, the hour for Ward's promised visit was at hand. Sometimes her hands and feet were icy cold; sometimes they seemed all on fire. She is resolved to be calm, and now 632 stands leaning against the window, gazing into the street, lost in

thought. She starts at every passing footfall on the wooden sidewalk. At last she hears the step she is listening for. It stops, and, as the bell rings, she trembles, and is as pale as death; then flushed to scarlet; then she becomes unnaturally calm. Miss Scott opened the door herself, and Lizzie hears her say:

“Oh, Captain, how do you do? I am so glad you have come, for your friend, Miss Lawson, is expecting to see you.”

“Oh, she is, eh! Well, I came to see her, because I am about to be absent from the city for awhile; so I wanted to say goodbye.”

Miss Scott was about to open on him, and give him a little of her mind in regard to his treatment of Lizzie; but, on a second thought, she determined not to do so, but to leave him to the lady herself. So she just said:

“You will find her in her own parlor, Captain.”

Captain Ward stepped to the door, and knocked. It was at once opened, and Miss Scott heard Lizzie's cordial reception of her visitor, while he seemed to treat her in a careless, cavalier manner.

“I will just go to my own room,” said Miss Scott to herself; “and then I can hear all that passes between them, as the partition is only cotton cloth. I know it is not right to listen in this way, but in this case I am excusable; for, God knows, all I want is to help this poor girl out of a terrible position, and I must know how that rascal treats her; for I am myself going to expose him to her father, if he does not do what is right, for she will not have the courage to do it, I am afraid.”

If a good motive could excuse Miss Scott for eavesdropping, she undoubtedly had one, and was actuated by no other.

“Well, Lizzie, my girl, how do you get on these times?” said Ward, throwing himself into a rocking-chair.

“Oh, first-rate, Captain; except that I have been very lonesome at times. I am always so, when you stop away so long, Captain.”

“Oh, you flatter me, Lizzie. But Lizzie, by Jove, you look first-rate. Do you know that you have grown handsomer than ever?”

“I am glad you think so, Captain; for you are the only one in the world I care to look handsome to.”

“None of that soft solder, Lizzie; for I came to tell you that I am going away for awhile.”

633

“To sea?” said Lizzie, anxiously.

“Yes, to sea; and for a good, long time, too, I rather think.”

“Do my father and brothers go with you?” said Lizzie, in a quick, excited voice.

“Yes; of course they do!”

“Oh, well, you will take me with you, too, because father told me you would ask me to go, and said I must go; and of course I will go.”

“Oh, no, Lizzie, my girl, of course you will do nothing of the sort. Your old father knows nothing about it.”

“Why! I told father that we were engaged to be married, and he was very glad, and said it was all right, and that he supposed you would have the ceremony performed the day we sailed; and he and the boys brought me some handsome wedding ornaments, and a beautiful dress, which I will show you.”

“I do not care to see either dress or ornaments.” And, looking fiercely at the now trembling girl, he continued: “Did I not tell you never to tell your father or brothers anything that passed between you and me!”

“But they questioned me closely, and I hated to tell them what was false.”

“Nonsense! You ought to be ashamed of yourself!”

“Oh, forgive me, Captain! I will not do it again. But you will take me, your little, lovig wife, with you, Captain?” She gave her voice all the coaxing sweetness, that was natural to it in happy moods, and laid her hand gently on his shoulder, as she went on: “And you will have the ceremony performed to-day or to-morrow?” As she spoke, she trembled with emotion, and her voice was as low as a whisper. Ward, with an impatient movement, shook her hand from his shoulder, as he said, in a rough voice he had never used to her before:

“I will do neither the one, nor the other. Make up your mind to that, girl!”

“Oh, Captain, Miss Scott told me to-day that, unless you married me within two days, I must leave her house; and that would disgrace me!”

“How nice she is getting here in California, all at once! If Miss Scott does not want your money, there are plenty of boarding-houses that do.”

“Oh, Captain, you do not mean to leave me and go away, before you have the ceremony performed?”

634

“Nonsense, girl; don't put on airs, yourself. You did not really think that I intended to marry you? You cannot be such a fool as that!”

“Not marry me, Captain!” said Lizzie, looking astonished and frightened. “Did you not swear to me, over and over, in the most solemn way, that we were as good as married in the eyes of

God, who heard your vow of fidelity and truth to me. And that the exact day the ceremony was performed was of no consequence; and that it should be performed some day, very soon!”

“Oh, Lizzie, you are really very amusing,” said Ward, with a chuckling laugh. “Of course I swore all manner of things to overcome your fanatical scruples; but what of that? It is a way we men have, as you will find out when you have a little more experience.” And he laughed in a mocking sort of a way. “No, Lizzie; the next chap you have to deal with you will have more experience.”

Lizzie grew deadly pale, and, half-gasping for breath, she arose from her seat, and then threw herself back again, as she cried out:

“Oh, Captain! Captain! do not talk to me in that way. I know you do not mean what you are saying; but you will drive me mad if you talk so to me! No, no, no! You will not let me be disgraced! I know you love me; you have sworn you did; so I know you will pity me, and not let me be disgraced here before them all!”

She now dropped her head forward, resting it between her hands on the center-table, and, in a terribly mournful, beseeching voice, went on:

“Oh, I could tell you something! oh, I could tell you something! and, oh, I thought it would make you so happy!”

Ward gave a half-frightened start, arose from his rockingchair, took another seat, and, with a struggle, composed himself, and now regarded Lizzie with a sort of a contemptuous, careless smile. Oh, he comprehends the news the miserable girl wished to tell. That strange, mysterious news, that, when whispered by trembling, agitated, but joyous lips, into the ear of the young husband, seems to awaken and arouse into active life every noble sentiment of his nature; and, though the news be joyous, yet with it comes an awe, as though a voice from on high had announced a mighty trust reposed in him, for which he will one day be held responsible. Yes; to the worthy husband it is news that 635 flings out his interest in life, in country, in everything around him, a whole generation beyond his own, and fills his heart with overflowing gratitude to God, and the most

fervent love and tenderness for the partner who is the messenger and bearer of the glad tidings. Yes; Lizzie's words of agony are comprehended by Ward; and even he, the murderer and blasphemer, hears in it *God's* voice. He starts from his seat, as we have seen, looks around, and is uneasy for a moment, but only for a moment, for his heart is of stone and untouched; and, with cool contempt, that seems blasphemy, he dishonors the proffered trust, and, with a careless smile says:

“Oh, that is it, is it? I understand you now. Well, I will send you a person who will arrange all that for you!”

And again he laughs, stands up and looks out the window, as though he had not much interest in what he was talking about. Lizzie's breath seemed to choke her, as she now struggle for calmness to speak. She threw herself back in her chair, her temples clasped tightly with both hands, her eyes wild and unsteady.

“Merciful God!” she murmurs to herself, “help me!” as she drops on her knees for a last humble, touching appeal for mercy and compassion. Her hands are clasped in supplication; her voice is full of wild, earnest entreaty, as she exclaims:

“Oh! Captain Ward, you do not mean, you cannot mean the wicked thing you hint at! Oh! you cannot mean murder! and, oh, God! such a murder! Oh! do not use such horrid language, or I will die at your feet! You know, that in the eyes of *God*, I am your lawful wife! Yes; you have sworn to me a thousand times that I was your wife; and I have always loved and honored you as my husband, and will always so love you. Do but acknowledge me before every one, and I will be your slave as well as your loving wife! I know you did not mean the horrid, wicked thing you said! Tell me! oh, tell me! that you did not mean it! Oh! mercy! mercy! I beg it on my knees!”

Ward, who continued to look out the window, while tapping the sash in a careless sort of a way, as if keeping time to his thoughts, now exclaimed, in a tone of impatience:

“Pshaw! Lizzie, you are acting and talking like a fool! If you want to let out your relations to me, I do not care a fig. I only spoke for your good, and I will now tell you the whole truth, to show

the folly of expecting me to marry you. I am going to be married this evening, or, at furthest, to-morrow evening, to the most charming and beautiful girl I ever laid my eyes on; and then I am going to leave this city for good and all. So get up, Lizzie, and take things as you find them, like a woman of sense; for nothing is more sure than that I will be married to my true love to-morrow evening, if not before!”

As these words fell on Lizzie's ear, a sudden and terrible change came like magic on her countenance. The quiet, humble, beseeching expression vanished, and in its place came one of dark defiance and of the fiercest hate. Her eyes were all fire; her cheeks were as pale as white marble; her lips were quivering and apart, showing her ivory teeth, set hard together. In one instant she was on her feet; her motions now being that of a stealthy cat; she was at her full height; her bosom heaved, but yet she did not seem to breathe; with an impatient shake of her head she threw back the hair from her temples, and the whole mass now fell loose behind her shoulders; with one more soft, noiseless movement she opened the drawer of her work-table and grasped the dagger her father had given her the night before; and now came hissing through her teeth close to Ward's ear:

“You are a liar, villain, for to-morrow you will burn in hell!”

As quick as a flash Ward comprehended his danger, and his face was to Lizzie's just in time to ward off a blow from her up-lifted dagger. When foiled, she stepped back, and, crouching as a panther might, to gather strength for a new onset, with a cry of despair and rage, she bounded on her destroyer, who, now pale with abject fear, seized a chair to defend himself. She missed her blow, and, with the chair, he struck the dagger from her hand. Then she flew at his throat with the fury and strength of insanity, which, for a moment, seemed to overpower Ward. In the struggle, his neckkerchief, vest, shirt and all were torn away. With a last terrible, maniac effort, she brought him staggering on one knee, and, with one arm around his neck, she tried to hold him down, while she reached out for the fallen dagger; but poor Lizzie's strength was now fast on the wane, and, with a desperate effort, Ward freed himself from her hold. She sprang on him once more, but now Ward grasped her delicately formed neck, with both his hands, with a terrible iron grip. His thumbs sank

in on her throat; she chokes; her eyes start open with a dead stare; her jaw drops, blood spouts from her nose, and her arms fall powerless by her side.

637

Ward sees that she is vanquished, and, with all his might, he pitches her backwards from him, and, without looking to see the consequences, dashed out of the house. As he hurried along Montgomery street, he tried to conceal from view his bloody, torn vest and shirt, while he muttered to himself:

“There was a little more of that than I bargained for. A little more and she would have spoiled my wedding, after all. That is two escapes within two days. If I escape one more struggle, nothing can hurt me. The Devil is good to his own, they say. Yes; one more escape, and Old Nick can put up his bottom dollar on me. I must get old Jack and the boys on board at once, before they hear of this, or I might have trouble; but I do not fear them, anyway, I so completely own them.”

When Lizzie was hurled backwards by Ward, she went against the center-table, which fell over, and with it she came heavily to the floor, striking her head with great force against the edge of the sofa, which cut a terrible gash in her temple. As Ward rushed out, Miss Scott dashed in, and was horrified at the sight of Lizzie lying senseless and bleeding on the floor. In answer to her loud cry for help, the hired girl and two lady boarders came running in. Poor Lizzie was soon laid on the bed, and cared for with the kindest attention. When first she came to her senses, she was wild and incoherent, but gradually became composed, and had a full sense of her misery. She was suffering intensely from the bruises on her head and shoulders. Miss Scott, to soothe the pain, bathed the injured places with laudanum, which seemed to give some relief; but a raging fever now set in, and Lizzie became perfectly wild. Miss Scott grew alarmed, and left the room for a moment to send for medical aid. As she did so, Lizzie leaped from the bed, seized the vial of laudanum, and swallowed its contents, and then lay back in her bed, as if in a faint. When Miss Scott returned, she found her in a stupor, which, in an hour, ended in her death.

From the time Lizzie came to her senses, until the stupor overpowered her, she was earnestly praying for mercy and forgiveness. She called for her book of common prayer; but, finding she

could not read it, she kissed it and laid it near her. The doctor Miss Scott had sent for gave a certificate that Lizzie Lawson died from an accidental over-dose of laudanum; and so it went to the public.

Just as she expired, Johnny Lucky called, as he did every day, “to see,” as he said, “if Miss Lizzie wanted anything.” He 638 howled with wild grief when he found her dead. Miss Scott dispatched him immediately for the father and brothers.

In the afternoon they arrived. Their grief was terrible to behold. They kissed her cold lips, the wound on the temple, and the black marks of Ward's fingers on her neck, over and over, while sobbing as if their hearts would break. This excessive grief looked the more terrible because it was rough, strong men that yielded to it. The father and brothers now arose from their crouched position, near the bed upon which Lizzie was laid out, and retired with Miss Scott into the sitting-room, where she gave them a brief account of the last terrible scene between Lizzie and Ward. The old man then said:

“Thank you, Miss Scott, for all your good and kind ways to poor Lizzie; and I have one thing more to ask you. The boys and I have to put to sea this afternoon or to-night, but I will leave five hundred dollars for you in Burgoyne & Co.'s bank, and we want you to see that our poor Lizzie is nicely buried, and that she has a minister of her own religion at the funeral; and we want the grave nicely fixed up, you know, with a nice head-stone, with her name on it, all nice, like the best of them; for it is all I can do, anymore, for my poor little Birdie.” Then, turning to the boys, he said: “Let us go back, boys, and wish our poor Lizzie good-bye.”

They go in, and again they passionately kiss her cold, dead face. Now they kneel and hold each other's hands over the dead girl. But, oh! let us shut the door and stop our ears, for their words, spoken in that terrible hour and position, are not words of prayer and submission. Oh! no; in defiance of God's holy law, it is a frightful oath of vengeance they swear!

CHAPTER XXV.

ANXIETY FOR WALTER AND MINNIE—ON THE TRACK.

As John McGlynn had agreed to do, he called at the appointed hour at Walter's cottage, and was surprised to find neither Walter nor his sister at home. The girl said that Mr. Wagner had sent a hack for his sister in the forenoon, and that neither of them had come back; but that a boy soon after called, and told her that Mr. Wagner and his sister had gone to Sacramento, and would not be back for two days; and that she might shut up the house and go to her sister's until then.

"I cannot understand their going off in that sort of way," said Jane; "but I suppose it's all right; people do such strange things here in California."

John went away with a strange feeling of doubt in his mind; so much so that he went to the Chief of Police, and told him of the matter, that officer said:

"Well, I will have the house closely watched; for, if there is anything wrong, the rascals will come at night to gut the house."

And so it was arranged. For two mornings McGlynn called on the Chief, but he reported that all at the cottage remained undisturbed. McGlynn now, somehow, felt himself growing excited over the mystery, and could think of little else. He called on Father Maginnis, and was surprised to find him hardly less excited than he was himself. The good Father exclaimed, when he heard all the girl Jane had related in regard to the brother and sister:

"What can all this mean? Where can they have gone? What makes it so very strange is that I am attending to a matter of business for Wagner, and I cannot understand his going off without seeing me."

"Oh," said McGlynn, "he told me in confidence about that note. Was it taken up?"

“Yes; Captain Fitzgerald took it up, and the clerk at the bank told him that half an hour before a man called there, and wanted to pay the note; but the clerk would not give it without a written or personal order from Wagner.”

“That goes to show,” said John, “that this Captain Ward, whom Wagner thought his friend, was the real enemy.”

“I told him so, and was sure of that; and Minnie, his sister, fully agreed with me,” said the Father.

While McGlynn and Father Maginnis were thus comparing notes, Captain Fitzgerald made his appearance. He came, he said, to ascertain if the Father had yet seen Wagner. Now all three talked for some time over the mystery of the sudden disappearance of the brother and sister. The more they talked and discussed it, the more they all grew excited.

“Why,” said Captain Fitzgerald, “I dreamed of them all night; at one time Minnie was singig for me the song she sang the other day, at other times I thought she was my sister, and so I was disturbed all night. The fancy that she was my sister must have come from the wonderful likeness between this Miss Wagner and my poor sister Ann. Ever since I saw her I keep thinking of my sister. Is it not strange?”

“Are they not relations of yours, Captain?” said John McGlynn.

“Why, no, Mr. McGlynn. Why do you ask the question?”

“Because,” said John, “their mother's name was Ann Fitzgerald.”

“Ann Fitzgerald!” said the Captain, looking quite agitated. “How do you know that, Mr. McGlynn?”

“I recollect when Walter was driving a team for us, when first he came to California, in '49, he told me all about his mother; and how she came from Ireland with a family of emigrants, and then what a hard fight she had to get on; and how his father defended her before he ever knew her; and how

they got acquainted, and were married; and I know her name was Ann Fitzgerald. He told me, too, how his little sister got the fifty dollars to enable him to come to California.”

“Oh! can it be possible,” said Captain Fitzgerald, now in great excitement, “that their mother is really my long lost sister? And yet it must be; Minnie is so very like her.”

“You can depend,” said Father Maginnis, “on what John tells you; for he knows every man's history in this city for at least a generation back.”

641

“Well,” said John, “there is nothing strange in such a discovery, for such are occurring every day here in California.”

“And they report their mother alive and well?” said the Captain.

“Oh, yes, Captain. And, by the way, I have a letter of introduction Minnie brought me from her mother,” said Father Maginnis, rising from his seat and taking the letter from his desk and handing it to the Captain.

“Oh! merciful Providence! it is my sister's handwriting, surely.”

“Well,” said Father Maginnis, “you can soon settle the question, if we ever find the dear children.”

It was then agreed between McGlynn and Captain Fitzgerald that they should go together and work up the case to the best of their ability. The first place they went to was the Oriental Hotel; and there they were surprised to learn that Captain Ward had paid up his bills, given up his room and left, as the clerk said, for Sacramento on the afternoon of the day Walter and Minnie had disappeared. The clerk saw they looked excited, and asked them some questions. They avoided decided answers. The clerk said:

“After the Captain left, the girl who makes up the rooms found something very strange stowed away under the bed.”

McGlynn immediately asked what it was, and the clerk brought out of the baggage-room a package done up in a newspaper. He opened it, and exhibited a shirt, vest and neckkerchief, all covered with blood; and the shirt was torn, and the vest had no buttons, being evidently pulled out. Fitzgerald became very much excited, but John remained apparently cool, as he said to the clerk:

“Well, there is a little mystery we are on the hunt about, so I will get the Chief of Police to call and see those articles; so please lay them away carefully.”

They now proceeded to the office of the Chief of Police, and told him of the discovery of these clothes. The Chief thought the business looked very serious, and advised perfect secrecy, and promised to put his best men on to work it up. At the very outset, it was discovered by the detectives, on inquiry at the Custom House, that the British bark Blue Bell, Captain Ward, master, had cleared the day before Walter's disappearance, for the Sandwich Islands, and, on further inquiry, they found that the Blue 642 Bell had sailed some time during the night of the day after she cleared.

When evening came, McGlynn and a police officer took their stations on the wharf, to await the arrival of the Sacramento boat; for this was the day Walter should have returned, if the story was true that he had gone to Sacramento. The Chief himself and Captain Fitzgerald went to the cottage. They found Jane there in great agitation and alarm. They told her they would remain until the boat was reported in, and then see her safe home if the brother and sister did not arrive. While Captain Fitzgerald sat waiting in the cottage, he looked at everything with the greatest interest, as he was now almost sure the two absent ones were of his own blood. He was soon relieved of the last lingering doubt in this respect, from his eyes resting on a prayer-book that lay on a side table. He took it up, and, opening it, found, to his astonishment, his own name, written in his own handwriting, on the first blank page; and on the second was written as follows:

“MY BELOVED SON WALTER: I give you this prayer-book as you are going so far away from me, for it is far more precious than any I could buy with money. It once belonged to my poor, darling brother, who was driven by persecution out of poor Ireland, and I suppose lost his life

among strangers. Always pray for him, darling son, as well as for your devotedly attached mother. ANN WAGNER.”

The Captain could not restrain his emotion on reading this evidence of his sister's unchanged love. He arose, went out on the porch, and walked up and down, lost in thoughts of long, long ago. Soon McGlynn and the policemen came, and reported no arrival by the boat.

Now the Chief took a careful survey of everything in the house. It was evident that the occupants had suddenly and unexpectedly left, as the girl had all the time stated. All Walter's and Minnie's clothes were there, as if in every day use; a hundred dollars in gold was found in Walter's trunk. The Chief took down the girl's statement in writing, which included the scene of Ward's proposal to Minnie, and her rejection of him. Jane cried bitterly all the time, exclaiming:

“Poor Miss Minnie; oh! that villain has murdered her for not marrying him, as he said he would.”

It was a dark and disagreeable night, and the most intense and fearful mystery seemed to pervade the whole cottage. The Chief put out the lights, locked the door and sent an officer to see Jane safe home. The next day they continued hard at work on the case. They found that the carriage which took Minnie away was got at Orrick Johnson's, but that the party hiring it took no driver; so Johnson's men could give no information of any value. Two of the city police had unaccountably disappeared the same day that Walter and Minnie had; and now, on the third day, was the first time it occurred to the Chief to connect this circumstance with the mystery. This explained and threw light on some points of the case, and he worked on with more hope.

On the morning of the fourth day, the papers reported the British bark Blue Bell lost. She had, it would seem, left without a pilot sometime during the night of the day after she cleared at the Custom House, and had gone ashore outside the heads, was a total loss, and it was supposed all on board had perished. It was believed there was no insurance.

When, late that day, John McGlynn and Captain Fitzgerald called at the office of the Chief of Police, to ascertain what progress had been made in unraveling the mystery, the Chief said:

“Well, yes; some progress. I have discovered enough to convince me that the brother and sister were both kidnapped by this Captain Ward and taken on board the Blue Bell; and I fear there is little doubt but that they were both lost with the illfated bark. I see no other solution of the mystery. So far, I have kept the matter from the public, but there is no use in secrecy any longer; and, if nothing turns up to-day, I will report it all to the press, and see if outsiders can give us any information.”

McGlynn and his friend turned away disheartened and downcast, with hardly a hope left for the safety of the young people in whom they had become so intensely interested. As they walked slowly along Kearny street, too sad in thoughts to speak, they saw a police officer they knew to be at work on the case, hurrying toward them. As he passed, then he said: “Come, come to the office of the Chief of Police; I have news, news!” And on he darted, and they in hot pursuit after him.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PRISONERS—CAPTAIN WARD'S HORRID FATE.

Now, my dear readers, let us return to Walter and poor Minnie, as we left them seated together in a boat rowed by six cut-throat looking villains, under the command of Brown. Minnie's brave words of courage are not lost on Walter.

“Oh, darling Minnie,” he says, “if you were but safe out of their hands, what a Heaven it would be to me, even if my fate was to be thrown, with these manacles on my limbs, into the bay; but when I think of you in the power of that black-hearted villain, I confess I quail to the very inmost recesses of my heart! And yet when I see you near me, Minnie, and looking and speaking so courageously, I too feel a confidence that God will, in some way, aid us.”

“Oh, Walter, we have no power of our own to escape; I do not see, or try to see any.” Now Minnie sat up erect, and, raising one hand up, as if to emphasize her words, she continued: “No; I do not pretend to see a way, but I do not dare to doubt but that God will open some way and save us. So, Walter, let us be what we pretend to be—Christians and Californians. If it is God's holy will that we

should this day go to Him, do not fear, my brother, that He will allow our honor to be sullied. The reason I speak so much to you, Walter, of confidence and courage, is because I know that it is for me you fear.” Walter's eyes were on Minnie while she spoke, and her noble, courageous words and whole bearing filled him with admiration, and with confidence in the result of the contest before them, whatever it might be.

“Well, Minnie, darling,” he said, “while your courage lasts, you will, I trust in God, not see mine give way; and I will pray to God for faith, like you, Minnie, and that I may be able to realize that He is near us all the time, dear sister, as you say.”

645

Now they began to come in plain sight of Saucelito, and see the Blue Bell anchored in Richardson's bay, not far from where the railroad depot is now located. The afternoon's chilly wind was beginning to blow, a heavy, dark fog was, as usual, setting in from the sea, the rough-looking mountains and hills of Marin County around Saucelito looked terribly dark and lonesome. The point of land on which now stand two beautiful and charmingly located hotels, with many private residences near by, and the busy railroad depot was at that time without a house of any description, or mark of man's presence. A half mile to westward was the famous water depot, where nearly all the pioneer ships of California get their supply of fresh water, when about to put to sea. But even at this water depot there was no regular settlement. There was erected there a huge tank, for the reception of the water, and whatever men were necessary to do the work of supplying the ships lived near by, and no more. The low hills and points of land around Saucelito were at that time, as they are partly now, covered with oaks and a scrubby growth of timber. As Minnie and Walter were entering all these dark and lonesome surroundings, the prisoners of cut-throats, Walter felt Minnie's arm draw close around his waist, and a shudder or chill seemed to shake her frame. He dropped his head until it rested lightly on hers, as he whispered:

“Courage, darling Minnie, courage!” She turned her look on his face, and with a calm smile, said:

“Oh, don't fear, dear Walter; it was only a chill from the cold fog.”

On, on, the boat dashes, through the dark, rough water. They are now alongside, and, in a few minutes more, on the deck of the vessel they so feared. Every one on board seems to obey Brown. He orders Walter and Minnie to be conducted to the cabin, and they soon found themselves alone. In a few minutes more, Brown makes his appearance, and says:

“Mr. Wagner, Captain Ward may not be on board for two hours yet. The cook has some dinner all prepared, and I would advise you and your sister to eat of it; for, after all, you and the Captain may come to some compromise; and, it may be, part friends. Who knows?” He paused, and Walter said, with his eyes on Minnie's face:

“Are we to be permitted to eat alone?”

“Certainly; that is what I meant.”

646

“Then we will be obliged,” said Walter, without looking toward Brown.

Now a disagreeable-looking young man, whom Walter at once recognized as the boy who brought the note from Macondray & Co. the morning of the forgery, entered with some broiled fowl, vegetables, and a bottle of claret wine. They ate but sparingly, though each urged the other to eat; but they were under too intense an excitement to have much appetite.

About four o'clock, they heard a bustle on deck, and Minnie's heart sank, for she knew their hour of trial had come; but she almost at once recovered herself, and as Ward entered the cabin she had nothing but proud scorn on her lips as she sat near Walter, with her arms folded across her breast.

“Good afternoon, Walter; good afternoon, Miss Minnie,” said Ward, throwing himself on the sofa; and without waiting for any recognition of his salutation, he continued: “Walter, my friend, I was sorry to have had to order those little inconveniences put on your limbs; but if we come to terms they shall be removed at once, and I shall make any and every reparation for the indignity in my power.”

“Please to state your intentions with regard to my sister and myself,” said Walter in a firm voice.

“Ah; that is coming right to business. Well, that is our California way, and the best way of proceeding. I hate a round-about way of doing business. Well, Walter; that was a close shave you made yesterday; if I had been six inches further behind, that knife you broke in the door would have ended my career.”

“My only regret is that it did not. But go on and tell us your intentions, sir. The less I talk with you the better I feel.”

“All you say is natural, but friend Walter,” and here Ward arose from his seat and walked close to the brother and sister, while a bitter, sardonic smile spread over his face, “be cautious; take my advice, and do not be too short in your speech; for you know you are now in my power out here in this ship; and what is far better, this little beauty here is just as much in my power as you are.” And, as Ward spoke, he put his hand under Minnie's chin before she saw his intention. She instantly knocked his hand away with the hardest blow she could give, and jumped to her feet. Walter, too, started to his feet, saying:

“Coward! you dare not, if I had not these irons on!”

647

Ward shrank back, and laughed a mocking laugh, saying:

“Oh, well; I will not bother you until you decline my proposition. Only, you must take my proposition in a business way, and accept or reject it. I will now tell you what I will do if you accept it; and then, if you wish, I will tell you what to expect if you reject it. I want Miss Minnie Wagner to marry me; and, if she consents, we will go from here to the Bay of Monterey, and I will send on shore for the priest of that place to perform the ceremony; and until the ceremony is performed she shall be treated like a queen under your own eyes. I will then, or now, if you both consent here to-night, give you twenty thousand dollars in gold to start business with in San Francisco, while I will

trade on the coast with the ship, and neither of you shall ever have any cause to complain of me as a man or a husband.”

Walter answered: “Set us both free on shore in San Francisco, and we will take that proposition under consideration, and give you a respectful answer; and we will pledge ourselves never to reveal your vile act of kidnapping us to-day.”

“Wagner, do not put me up for a fool. I have you now where I have a fair show of making good terms, and I will not relinquish my advantage, you may be perfectly sure. Perhaps you might now like to hear what I will do if you reject my offer. But, before I tell that, I want a ‘Yes’ or a ‘No’ to the proposition I made you. You know, Miss Minnie, that when I saw you last I told you I would pursue you in the future with deadly hate; but if you and friend Walter accept my proposition, I take all that back, and I will swear to love you forever more. Yes; to love you as I do now, while I look on you; for I never loved a woman before as I love you; I cannot shake it off. Yes, I cannot live without you, and have you I will, one way or the other; so say the word, ‘Yes’ or ‘No.’

“Only I am in your power, I will tell you that, no matter what the consequences may be, if we are to die, roasted alive, we would not accept your proposition.”

“Is that your answer, too?” said Ward, in a bitter tone, turning to Minnie.

“There are no torments ever yet invented I would not go through before I would accept such a degrading proposition.”

“Well, well, we shall see, dear Minnie, how you will like the choice you have made; for now I will tell you what I will do if you do not change your mind before night. I will have the 648 marriage ceremony performed here, in a rough way, perhaps, by old Jack, my first mate, this very night, and your good brother here shall look on and enjoy the scene; for, as sure as you are a living woman, you shall be my bride this very night.”

“I do not fear you, monster as you are! God is here near us!” said Minnie.

“Oh, I will show you all about that, this very night, Miss Minnie; and if you give me too much trouble, you know, I will ornament the yard-arm with this brother of yours. So you will have to be moderate, you know, if you want to save him.”

While Ward spoke, he let his dark, wolfish eyes glare on Minnie with the most fiendish look Minnie now sat close up to Walter, with her arm around his waist, and her head leaning against his shoulder.

“Villain, thief and robber that you are!” said Walter, “talk no more. Your words are as bad as your actions can be.”

“Oh, no; Mr. Walter Wagner, you are not a good judge of that yet. To-morrow you will be a good judge.” And here Ward chuckled his frightful laugh. “Yes, Walter; as I told you yesterday, your sister will beg for marriage yet, and I may then be in the humor to refuse it.”

The sister and brother made no answer, but their lips moved, as if in prayer to God, while their eyes were turned on each other.

“Consider this matter, friend Walter. Consider it well! I am in a humor to be friendly; for the fact is, I am desperately in love, and I hate to get into bad temper. You never saw me in a bad temper, Walter, my boy.” And Ward gave out a mocking laugh, as he continued: “And if you ever do see me in a bad temper, the chances are you will never see that manner of mine a second time. Oh, yes; that once will be enough for you. And I would advise Miss Minnie, if she loves you, never to let that humor come on. Oh, no; she had better never let it come on! But excuse me for a moment; I have to give some orders on deck.”

And now the brother and sister found themselves alone. The first impulse was to embrace each other. Walter raised his shackled arms over Minnie's head, and, dropping them to her waist, drew her to his bosom in a wild excitement, while he kissed her over and over, as he murmured:

“Darling! darling!”

Minnie returned his embrace, and whispered back, in a firm voice, while her breath came fast and hot against Walter's cheek:

“Oh, darling brother, do not give way! All may depend, you know, on our courage and presence of mind.”

Minnie's words came just in time, and Walter made a desperate effort to recover his self-control, and, disengaging her, he said in a composed voice:

“Yes, yes, Minnie; what you say is true. I will be firm, and presence of mind may save us yet; but these terrible shackles will unman me if I do not keep a constant watch upon myself.”

“Now, Walter darling, I will tell you that after I read that forged note asking me to come immediately to you, I never suspected the forgery, for the resemblance to your writing was perfect.”

“Yes; perfect,” said Walter.

“No, I never had a doubt in regard to the note; but a sort of apprehension seized me, I knew not why,” and here her voice sank to a whisper in his ear, “which caused me to place Uncle John's dagger in my bosom. I know how to use it, you know; he showed me, as I believe I told you before.”

Here Minnie looked all around the cabin, and was going to draw the dagger from her bosom; but Walter stopped her, and whispered in her ear:

“Be careful; there may be eyes or ears near us, darling. So be careful not to put your hand near where the dagger is.”

“You are right, Walter. Well, what I was going to say was this: That the moment they attempt to take me away from you, I will pretend to hesitate and half yield, and in that way get Ward off his guard, and then I will use it, Walter, and trust to God for the result.”

Walter, in the same whispering way, said:

“That will be the best way, darling, for you to act. You know the place to strike at?”

“Oh, yes; Uncle John showed me.”

As Minnie spoke, her frame shook with a shudder, but she remained firm.

“God save you, darling sister, from the necessity; but risk anything, and do anything, before you let them take you away from me; and even with these shackles on, I may help and be of some use to you in the struggle.”

“Here he comes! Oh, God! assist us and give us both 650 courage and faith,” was Minnie's last whisper, as Ward again appeared.

When Ward reached the deck, on leaving Walter and Minnie, he called out:

“Is Mr. Lawson yet on board?”

“Yes, sir,” said the second-mate; “he and his sons have just come on board.”

“Here I am, Captain,” said Jack, stepping forward.

“Where have you been, Mr. Lawson, all the day? You should have been here attending to your duties as first officer of this ship, sir. I looked for you on shore, but I could find nothing of you sir.”

“Well, Captain, you must excuse me; for, it being the last day on shore, you see, my boys had to get an outfit for themselves, and visit their sweethearts for the last time, you know; and I hurried them all I could, and we did not even take time to go and see Lizzie, as we intended to do.”

As Jack said this, Ward started, and his frame visibly shook a little. And Jack's eyes fell on him with a peculiar, wild gleam; but, letting them at once drop on the deck, he ran on in a careless tone:

“But I promised the boys, if you put off sailing for one day more, I would go on shore with them and spend a half day or so with Lizzie; for she will be so lonesome, you know, Captain, at our going away.”

“Oh, well; that is all right, Jack; and if I do defer sailing, you and the boys shall have half a day on shore to spend with Lizzie. I left her a handsome present of money in the hands of Macondray & Co. just before I came on board; so she will have a good time while we are away.”

“Oh, yes, Captain; I have no doubt she will; that is all right. And I hear that you have trapped a handsome piece for the voyage.” And Jack gave a meaning, chuckling laugh, intended to make the Captain think he approved of the little maneuver.

“Oh, yes, Jack; I have; and I will have to get you to perform the marriage ceremony this evening, as you have a right by law to do, you know at sea, under certain circumstances; and one of these circumstances is, when the Captain is the man to be married, as in this case.”

“Oh, we will have some fun, then,” said Jack, with the same peculiar laugh. “Is it to be to-night, Captain?”

651

“Oh, yes; this very night.”

“Is she willing, or are we to have the fun of making her your wife whether she likes it or not?”

“Oh, she is as obstinate as a mule, and as fiery as a wildcat.”

“And her brother is on board, they say?” said Jack.

“Yes, Jack; he is, in irons, sitting with her in the cabin now.”

“And will he not advise her to yield to save himself?”

“No, Jack; the fellow is such a fool that I believe he would tell her to hold out if we were roasting him to death.”

“Oh, he is that sort, is he? Well, well; how strange. Well, we will see this evening; for you must not lose your game, Captain, under any circumstances.”

“Thank you, Jack. And now get the boat ready to go on shore to dig up that box, you know; and give me four good men and a small crowbar, a spade, and a rope to rig the box with, so that we can bring it over the hills the same way we took it up, you recollect.”

“Aye, aye, sir; all will be ready in fifteen minutes,” and Jack left, and the Captain returned to the cabin. As Ward entered the cabin, he said:

“Now I have to go on shore here at Saucelito, on some business. I will be absent for perhaps three hours, and while I am gone I want you both to take what I have said into consideration; and I advise you not to be such fools as to hope for a miracle to save you. The days of miracles, you know, have passed; and I defy any power, above or below, to come between you and me, Minnie. I told you our fates were linked together, you know; and now you see I was right. I felt it in my bones ever since I saw you. I have told you what I will do if you hold out, and as sure as we are in this cabin I will do just as I have said. You cannot and will not escape me; but, if you accept my proposition, I will leave nothing undone to make everything agreeable to you. So have your minds made up when I come back.”

While thus addressed, Walter and Minnie remained seated as before, with a composed, unchanged look; but made no reply whatever. Just then Brown appeared, saying:

“Did you send for me, Captain?”

“Yes, Mr. Brown; I want you to stay here on guard.” And, as Ward spoke, he unbuckled the belt from around his waist, in which hung a revolver and bowie-knife, and, handing it to Brown, continued: “I see you are unarmed; put this on, I will get one 652 from Jack; and let there be no communication with our prisoners here until I come back, under any pretence; and you are to treat them with the utmost respect.”

So saying, he left the cabin. As he ascended the hatchway, he said to himself: “Why, old Jack is in great good humor, though he knows that I have the proud Yankee bird caged on board, and he actually agrees to help me to make her yield. What a fool Brown was to think that such as he and his boys had feelings worth regarding. Well, everything succeeds with me to a charm. If she holds out, I will have a chance to outdo the most villainous acts ever committed by my worthy villainous father, and old Sir John will have the honor I have always promised him, of being the grandfather of the greatest rascal of modern times.”

“Please, Captain, the boat is all ready,” said the second mate.

Ward now, in great good spirits, threw himself on the side-ladder, and descended into the boat before he saw who manned it. He half started as he now saw Jack himself, his two boys, Ike and Mike, Yellow Dick and the boy Johnny Lucky, as the crew. A suspicion shot through his mind, and his first impulse was to leap back on the ladder and call for another crew; but the boat was instantly shoved out by a quick movement of Ike's and he, disliking to betray fear or suspicion, and perceiving that none of the crew were armed, he quietly took his seat as helmsman, and said in a careless way:

“Why did you come yourself, Lawson?”

“Oh, Captain,” said Jack, in a half-confidential tone, “the boys here and I have a small matter of money buried under a certain tree that we want to get, so we had to come.”

“Oh, that is all right,” said Ward, feeling now entirely relieved, though he felt a little disagreeable as he recollected that he had forgotten to arm himself, as he intended to do when he left the cabin.

They soon reached their destination, and all jumped on shore. Lawson said to Yellow Dick:

“Stay in charge of the boat, Dick, until we come back to you.”

“Aye, aye, sir,” answered Dick.

The place where they landed was a little cove, a short distance west of the common landing used at that time for the water depot. Captain Ward took the lead, following a trail that led 653 around and over a low hill to the west, then down into a little valley well grown up with small timber, through which a stream of the purest spring water came dashing its way to the bay from the steep hillside. Across this valley Ward led the way, and up the steep ascent on the other side, until he came opposite a little growth of scrub oak timber that stood on a point of land making boldly out into the bay. Here he stopped, and, consulting a memorandum book, he said:

“Yes, this must be the place; let us look for the old oak tree.”

Walking through the small timber, they came to an open spot, covered with a mat of half-dried grass, entirely clear of timber, except one old oak tree. This tree grew on the very outer edge of the cliff. It had partly yielded, it would seem, in its struggles with the ever-prevailing winds from the west; for it was bent over eastward almost to the ground, and its upper side was without a branch, and those on the lower side were nearly destitute of leaves. At this point the cliff was perhaps two hundred feet high above the water of the bay, which rushed foaming against its base all day and all night, as the ocean tide set in and out, in obedience to the laws that govern the great waters of the earth. A huge rock seemed to shelve out over the water, and form a foundation for this little spot of open, grassy land, upon which Ward and his men now stood. The view of the bay and surroundings

far out to sea from here was magnificent beyond description. As the party gained the opening, Ward stopped short, saying:

“Yes, we are right. There, yonder, is the very tree described in my memorandum.”

“You are right, Captain; and it is under that old oak our little matter of money is buried. Come over, Captain, and see us take it from its hiding-place.”

“No, no,” said Ward in an impatient, hurried voice; “do that yourself, after we have got through. Somehow I hate the sight of this place to-night; to me it looks horribly cheerless and cold. What Brown admires about it I don't see; for that frightful precipice is all that I can see, and I am near enough to that now to suit me; so let us go back here into this timber and dig up the box while we have daylight, and be gone from this cursed looking place.”

As Ward spoke he turned back to lead the way into the 654 timber. It must have been that some presentiment of impending evil oppressed him; for he looked pale and anxious. His voice had in it a tremulous tone, his motions were quick and nervous, while his eyes gleamed from side to side, as if in search of apprehended danger. A look of disappointment passed between Jack and his boys when Ward declined to go to the edge of the cliff as Jack had asked him to do; but they followed him into the timber without speaking.

“Aye, here is the spot, sure enough,” said Ward, pointing to a little mound well covered with grass; “and here are the four trees marked just as noted in my book; so off with your coats and to work lively, as I want to get out of this dismal place before dark.”

Ike and Mike obeyed without hesitation, and fell to work with a will. Soon the box came to view. Ward and Jack stood close to each other with their eyes fixed on the work. Ike now threw the crowbar, with which he had been trying to move the box, behind him and behind his father also, and dropped on his knees as if to examine the box, while he exclaimed:

“Look, Captain Ward; I fear it has been opened and robbed!”

Ward stooped to look, and, as he did so, Jack, with a movement as noiseless and stealthy as a wildcat when preparing to spring on its prey, picked up the crowbar, and, whirling it in the air, made a blow at Ward's head. The pirate's quick eye caught the shadow of the uplifted weapon, just in time to move his head and receive the terrible iron on his left arm, breaking it short off at the elbow. Now all three men sprang on Ward. He is borne down to the ground; but with almost superhuman strength he throws back his assailants with terrible blows from his only arm. The Lawsons are covered with their own blood, flowing from nose and mouth. There is no outcry heard from the terrible struggle—nothing but the quick, hard breathing and hoarse growling sound, sometimes taking form in words of muttered imprecation and hate. The contest is as noiseless as that of bulldogs in their fiercest fights. Ward is dragged, foot by foot, towards the cliff. Every yard of the ground is marked by the struggle. Nearer and nearer to the fearful precipice they approach. Johnny, wild with excitement, holds the rope in his hands, while he jumps up and down, and makes all sorts of contortions, in sympathy with the changes in the struggle. Now the cliff is almost gained. Ward is on his face, held down by 655 all three men. His right arm is stretched out before him, while the fleshless, red bone of the broken one protrudes through sleeve and all, and covers the grass with blood.

“The rope, Johnny, the rope!” cries Jack.

Quick as a flash, Johnny hands it to Ike, with the noose all prepared. Ike jumps from his position, slips the noose over Ward's head, and stoops while he fastens the end of the rope to the butt of the oak tree. Ward, who seems to have been gathering all his strength for one mighty effort, gives a sudden bound, and clears himself of both Jack and Mike. In an instant more, he seizes Ike by the belt on his waist, and now, with his only arm, he holds him over his head, crying out:

“Back, you murderers, or he goes over the cliff!”

Jack and Mike utter a fearful yell, and spring on him. Then Ike goes whirling over Ward's arm from the cliff. Now Ward fastens a despairing death grip on the Lawsons, and all three seem sure to go together over the cliff. But no; by kicks and blows they force Ward over the edge. Then he grasps

the rope near the end fastened to the tree, and slides slowly down half its length, until, sailor-like, he clasps it with his feet, and, using his teeth as a second hand, he begins to ascend again. Jack and Mike stand over him, watching, in their wild, savage fury, his desperate struggle for life. Now his ascent is stopped; for his teeth give way, and blood streams from his mouth. He looks up and sees Jack above him, with a fragment of rock in his hand, and about to hurl it upon him. In a hoarse, half-stifled voice, he cries out:

“Jack, take me up, and I will marry Lizzie, and make you all rich!”

“Ah, villain, Lizzie is dead, and I swore to send you to her; for she is waiting for you to fling you into the infernal regions, where you belong! Yes; here is Lizzie's answer and the message she sends you!”

While Jack spoke, Ward's eyes were fixed, staring on the rock in Jack's hands, and his eyes and head never moved as the terrible messenger of death came, with unerring aim, rushing through the air. Then the skull crushes in, the eyes leap from their sockets, the bloody jaw drops and the hideous, mutilated mass falls to the full length of the rope with a horrid thud!

It is almost night. The fog is now dense and dark, and the wind is rushing with a lonesome moan through the timber on 656 the cliffs around Saucelito, as Jack's yell of triumph sounds over the dead, mutilated body of Lusk. Hark! What scream or shriek is that that now pervades the whole atmosphere? Can it come from some sea-fowl, frightened by Jack's shout of frantic triumph? Or can it be; oh, can it be, that the spirit of poor Agnes Ward is hovering near, and now shrieks as her fiend-child is launched into a frightful eternity? Oh, poor Agnes Ward! can it be that that frightful mass of mutilated humanity, swinging there in that terrible death, is the growth of the poor little infant you hushed to sleep in the dismal London garret with your mournful song? The same poor little limbs you saved from being cold by wrapping them in miserable garments taken from your own shivering body? The same you fed when you had to starve yourself? The same whose little heart, so innocent then, beat close to yours, throb for throb, as its little form lay on your breast in the long, dark nights, as you watched for the dawning of the morning that was to bring no hope to

you? Yes, poor Agnes; it is the growth of the child about whose future, when all else was lost and dark, and dismal in your terrible, weary way, one solitary ray of hope did seem to loom up in the distance to induce you to struggle to live.

Oh, society, society! are not your ways, modes and worldly teachings responsible for this woeful scene of here to-day at Saucelito?

CHAPTER XXVII.

AT SEA IN AN OPEN BOAT—RESCUED BY DE FOREST.

After Ward had left the cabin to go on shore at Saucelito, Walter and Minnie remained seated together in a terrible state of suspense, yet careful to show no sign of fear to Brown's eye. They seldom spoke, and then in whispers. Brown walked up and down, but did not attempt to address them. Time passed, and it grew almost dark. Brown ordered the cabin lamps lit; he took out his watch, and began to look very uneasy, and once said aloud: "I cannot understand what detains the Captain so long." Then an undefined hope came to the brother and sister; but so faint that they did not dare to express it to each other. Brown grew more and more uneasy. He went to the upper steps of the cabin stairway, and called for the second mate.

"Where," he asks, "is Mr. Lawson?"

"With the Captain, on shore, sir."

"Oh," said Brown, with a start, "and who are the other men with the Captain and Mr. Lawson?"

"Mr. Lawson's two sons, sir, Yellow Dick and the boy Johnny Lucky."

Brown grew deadly pale, and became so faint that he had to sit down on the stairway. The second mate, not observing his agitation, retired.

“Oh, it must be,” murmured Brown; “old Jack has him sure. Yellow Dick is Jack's cousin, and Johnny Lucky would cut any fellow's throat for them. Was the Captain mad when he left with such a boat's crew?”

Just as Brown got back to the cabin, he heard the noise of a boat alongside. He again turned deadly pale, and threw himself on the sofa, repeating over and over:

“Oh, he's got him, he's got him, and I am lost!”

Now he plainly hears men leap on deck, and an order given out in Jack's voice, with the answers from the second mate, 658 “Aye, aye, sir.” Their feet are on the stairway, and Brown is almost in a faint. Minnie and Walter observe all this, and hope grows in their hearts in spite of themselves; but Minnie, nevertheless, gasps and trembles, and Walter whispers to her:

“Faith in God, Minnie; courage!”

“Oh, yes, darling; that tremor is over, thank God!” And she smiles in her brother's face and is a woman once more, ready to face any danger.

She averted her eyes from the stair-way when she heard the steps, and so did Walter, and now they are surprised and startled by hearing Jack's voice close to them, and, looking up, they see him, and three stout men, standing before Brown with revolvers in hand, while Jack says: “Mr. Brown, sir, throw up your arms!”

Brown obeys, crying out piteously: “Oh, Jack, spare my life, and I will serve you like a slave. I had nothing to do with Lusk's treachery to poor Lizzie.”

“Hold, villain, hold! Do not dare to speak her name again, or I will first cut out your tongue and then cast you ironed into the sea!”

Now Brown cringed to the floor with abject fear. He tried to speak; he tried to beg for life, and his jaws opened and shut, but not a word could the wretch articulate.

“Take that belt off him, Mike,” said Jack.

Brown, with trembling hands, unbuckled the belt himself and handed it to Mike.

“Where is the key to those shackles?” continued Jack, pointing to Walter, while he looked at Brown.

Still trembling, Brown drew the key from his pocket and gave it to Mike.

“Take those shackles off, Mike, and put them on this fellow.”

“Aye, aye, sir,” answered Mike, as he approached Walter, who now began to yield to a feeling of hope that was like a dream, and Minnie could hardly contain herself, there was such a rush of hope and joy about her heart. She did not yet understand how it was that Ward was not to come back, and that Jack seemed to have command of everything. Nor did Walter exactly comprehend it, and they both looked on in amazement, sometimes doubting if they really were awake.

Jack continued: “As soon as you have the irons on, take the fellow and put him in the hold, all secure, until I have time to attend to his case.”

659

“Oh, mercy, mercy, Jack! I have \$10,000, and you can have it all, if you will let me live and go on shore, and I will never betray you.”

“Away with the howling hound!” cried Jack, fiercely; and, moaning and begging, and shackled with the irons taken from Walter, Yellow Dick and Mike dragged Brown up the stairs and out of hearing. Now Jack turned to Walter, and said: “Young man, can you row a boat?”

“I think so,” said Walter.

“Would you venture to attempt, in this dark night, to row a boat to San Francisco, if I give you one to take your sister there?”

“I will try, anyway, and be most grateful to you.”

“As to your gratitude, young man, it is of no consequence to me now. I feel that my career is over. I have done things in my life that it will not do to even talk of. I am sorry for them, and I will do as poor Lizzie always wanted me to do—I will pray every day to God and the Savior to forgive me. Do you know, lady,” continued Jack, turning to Minnie, “I once had a daughter as dear to me as you are to your brother? I educated her like a lady. I had her taught the religion of my country. She looked to me so sweet and beautiful, and I only lived to love her. I used to dream of her all night, and every day I would laugh to myself when I thought of her. Well, well; this morning the man I had served all my life murdered her. Yes; Lusk—or Captain Ward, as we used to call him here—murdered her, after first proving false to her; and, having no power to get the law to punish him, we hanged him this evening by the neck from the cliff yonder. And my poor boy Ike lost his life in the struggle; for we had a fearful fight.” Here Jack stopped, shuddered, and turned away for a moment, as if to get command of his voice. After pacing up and down the cabin for a minute, he continued: “I once loved this man Lusk better than I loved any one in the world not of my own blood. I served him in every way, without asking the why or the wherefore; and, in return, he murdered my darling pet, my sweet child! But he is dead, on the cliff yonder, and I have no more to say of him.”

Minnie said, in her own sweet voice: “I wish I could say a word that would give you any comfort.”

“Comfort! Oh, no, lady; no comfort for me! My last hope of that has gone! But I have a great wish that God would forgive me, as Lizzie said He would; for I want to be where she is when I die. Can you tell me what I ought to do, lady?”

Then Minnie, in the gentlest way, told him what she thought he ought to do, and how he ought to pray. He listened attentively, and promised to do as she told him.

“One thing more I will ask of you to do, for Lizzie's sake,” said Minnie.

“And what can that be?” said Jack, looking surprised.

“I will ask you to spare the life of that wretched man Brown.”

“Why,” said Jack, “that was the fellow that helped Lusk in his game about poor Lizzie, and to trap you and your brother. Do you know that?”

“Yes; I know it all. But the Christian religion requires us to forgive all our enemies, if we expect to be forgiven ourselves.”

Jack hesitated, and then said: “Would Lizzie agree with you?”

“Most certainly she would.”

“Well, then, I will spare his life; for I want to do what you think Lizzie would wish me to do. And now I have a request to make of you.”

“Well,” said Minnie, “I am glad of that.”

“I want you to go to Miss Scott's boarding-house, and find where Lizzie is buried. And I want you to go yourself and put some flowers and little ornaments around the grave for me.” And then the old man's voice choked, and for some time he did not speak. Minnie, in earnest language, promised to attend to the grave.

“Not only now,” she said, “but on every Christmas eve.” A promise she never forgot to this day.

Jack now turned to Walter, saying: “I will send Johnny Lucky on shore with you, and he will be of some help in working the boat. He is a good sailor, and Mr. Wagner, if it comes in your way, give him a helping hand to get employment and the like. I will give the poor boy some money to start with, and I want you to advise him to be good, as Lizzie used to do.”

Here the old man again paused, and continued: "I would keep you until daylight, but we have to weigh anchor right off and put to sea; for I must avoid some ten men, who are to be 661 here some time to-night, and who are particular friends of Lusk and might give me trouble when they found what had happened, The men now on board are almost all my friends. I will now order you something to eat while I get the boat ready. You had better eat, because you have a hard row, and perhaps a hard night, too, before you."

As Jack spoke, he left the cabin, and the brother and sister again found themselves alone. And now they yielded to their first impulse, and poured out their thanks to the Almighty Giver of all good for their deliverance. Eatables were now before them, and with a good heart they ate, to give them strength for the work before them.

In a few minutes Jack announced the boat ready, saying to Walter: "I have put a demijohn of water on board, plenty of hard bread, three blankets, and something else that you will find when daylight comes, that belongs of right to you; so that if you do miss your reckoning to-night, you will not starve or freeze."

And now old Jack stooped down and whispered to Minnie: "Pray for me, for I have no one on earth to do it, now that Lizzie is dead."

"You shall have my poor prayers as long as life lasts," answered Minnie, as she stepped on the ladder and committed herself to the protection of a stout sailor, who descended it with her and placed her in safety in the boat. Then Walter took his place at the oars, and Johnny Lucky, with a lantern and a small pocket compass he got from Jack, took his place at the tiller. The night was dark, dismal and foggy, and, manned as the boat was, the situation of our friends was truly dangerous; but this they did not see. No; all they thought of now was their wonderful deliverance from the power of Lusk. They did not fear to face the danger of death in an ordinary way. Walter, too, was confident that he could row the little boat with perfect ease. Jack had instructed Johnny as to the course the boat should hold to make San Francisco; so Walter did not fear the result, and with a light heart shoved off, and was soon out of hearing of the terrible bark they had that day

approached with such fear. Johnny Lucky was a strange acting and looking boy. He had always a wild, scared look about him. He seldom spoke, except when compelled to by the business in hand. Then he said but little; not a word more than was necessary. There were times, however, when he seemed to wake from this reticence, and to become bright and half-wild with spirits. When in these moods, he would tell all sorts of stories of his childhood and boyhood, of the fearful scenes he had witnessed at sea on pirate ships, and on land among robbers and cannibals. Some of these stories were so improbable and fearful that few believed them, and supposed that when Johnny got into any of these moods he had a touch of insanity about him; but many people believed them, and listened with avidity. It is in the recollection of many of us to have heard Johnny talking in one of these wild moods about the death of the pirate Captain at the hands of his first mate, at Saucelito. None of his strange stories seemed to excite him so much as this one. He would almost froth at the mouth as he described the fearful scene, and then suddenly seem to sicken, grow faint, and drop into his wonted, half-stupid way. He was about seventeen years old at the time of which we are now speaking. His complexion was sallow; he was tall and lithe. He professed to know nothing of his parentage, race or country, but believed his parents to have been murdered off the coast of South America, and that he fell into the pirates' hands in that way, as his first recollections were connected with pirates and pirates' ships.

Minnie sat in the bow of the boat, with one of the Blue Bell's new red blankets, which Jack had given them, wrapped around her. For the first half hour, no one spoke, though Walter's and Minnie's thoughts were all wild and joyous at their recovered freedom. Then Johnny, in a quick, sharp tone, said:

“You let your oars go too deep, Captain; you never will hold out that way.”

Walter corrected the fault without speaking. Then, in a little while, Johnny covered his lamp with his handkerchief, so as to hide its light, and dropping on his knees peered close down over the water as far as he could see in the darkness, and exclaimed:

“The fog is lifting a little, and I think I can see land, and I think it is Alcatraz Island, and that the tide is taking us out towards the Golden Gate. We must make to the east of the island, Captain, or we may get out to sea.”

“Well, Johnny, you keep her heading right and I will do my best,” said Walter.

“Aye, aye, sir,” came from Johnny.

In a few minutes more, Johnny is again on his knees, peering over the water, and now exclaims:

663

“Oh, if I am not mistaken about that land being Alcatraz, we are losing instead of gaining.” Then, rising quickly, he said: “Lady, come and take my place; I will show you how to handle the tiller and look at the compass, and I will take the other pair of oars.”

Minnie instantly, with Walter's help, was by Johnny's side. He showed her what to do, and Minnie at once comprehended her duty.

And now Johnny threw himself into a seat in front of Walter; threw out the other pair of oars and worked in time with Walter. Now the boat seemed to fly through the water, and so they worked for perhaps twenty minutes. Walter said:

“Look again, Johnny.”

In an instant he was on his knees, and exclaimed:

“Oh, we cannot make it. Our only chance now will be to head our boat a point or two to the westward and try to make the main land east of the Fort. If we can catch that point, it is as much as we can do now.”

Then turning to Minnie, he showed her the required change in the compass, and dropped back into his place. And now they both pulled with all their might. Not a word was spoken for another

half-hour. And now the fog again became so thick that they could not see five yards from the boat. Johnny again breaks silence by saying:

“We will be either out to sea or close on land by the Fort in fifteen minutes. Can you hold out pulling for that time, Captain?” turning his head to Walter as he spoke.

“Yes, Johnny, I can hold out if you can.”

“I will do so if it kills me,” was Johnny's reply.

“Why do you say fifteen minutes, Johnny?” said Walter.

“Because, Captain, I know about what time it takes to cross the bay, in any way you can take it, and I have had two such scrapes as this before, and we saved ourselves by an oar's length.”

No more was then said, and Walter and Johnny pulled as men pull for dear life. Johnny soon began to duck down his head in a listening attitude, but made no remark until the full fifteen minutes were passed. Then he said, in a low, disappointed tone:

“We must have missed it, Captain; the ebbing tide was too much for us.”

No one spoke for ten minutes more, and Walter and Johnny 664 pulled on with all their strength. Then Johnny suddenly exclaimed:

“Oh, we are out beyond the Heads, sure; for here are the big waves and swells. I must take the tiller, or we may be capsized.”

And poor Minnie, with her heart sunk low, but courageous, took a seat in front of Walter.

“Take it easy now, Captain; for we must cruise here till day-light,” was Johnny's first remark after taking his new position. Minnie asked him, in a low voice:

“Can a boat as small as this live at sea?”

“Yes, lady; in moderate weather we might live a month, if well managed, and even longer.”

“Johnny,” said Walter, “you know a hundred times more about the sea than I do; so I will be guided in what I do by what you say.”

“Well, if you can row on, in an easy sort of a way, for about twenty minutes, do so. Then I can judge where we are by the motion of the water. I know now that we have crossed the bar, and that we are at sea; but I cannot yet tell our relative position to the harbor.”

So Walter rowed on as advised by Johnny, while he spoke cheerfully to Minnie.

“Oh, Walter,” she said, “I am not frightened. Our situation out here on this dark water is surely fearful but, oh, how little I mind it, compared to the terrible danger we were delivered from this very evening.”

“Yes,” said Walter; “I do not mind this in the least, though we may be in danger; but it is danger from death, and death only. The frightful position we escaped from I cannot, even now, on this dark, dismal sea, bear to think of in comparison.”

“No, Walter; somehow I feel and seem to realize that here we are, if I may so express it, in God's especial keeping! That He holds us in his hand, as it were, to do with us as He sees fit. So let us bow cheerfully to His will, whatever that may be.”

“Darling Minnie, it makes me feel happy to hear you talk so bravely, and I hope I will set you no bad example. I wish I could know that that note was really taken up and paid, and then, it appears to me, I would feel perfectly satisfied; for then, if anything was to happen to us out here, there would be no danger of disgrace to our name.”

665

“You mean the forged note in Page, Bacon & Co.'s bank?” said Johnny.

“Yes, Johnny. What do you know about it?”

“Oh, I know all about. That was the way they were to send you to State Prison, if your sister did not marry Captain Lusk; and they tried to get the note out of the bank. But the bank would not give it up without an order from you; and then Lusk forged a letter from you, telling the bank to give it up. But just as Brown got to the bank, he saw the clerk handing the note to a man by the name of Fitzgerald. When Lusk heard that he swore, and was very mad.”

“Oh, that is glorious!” said the brother and sister. “Thank you, Johnny, thank you.”

“Now,” said Johnny, “let us not talk, but listen. Stop rowing, Captain.”

Then Johnny threw himself on the side of the boat, and letting his head drop near the water, remained listening for five minutes, while he seemed hardly to breathe. He then sat up erect, and said:

“Now, Captain, lay up your oars. We are over a mile from land, anyway, and it may be that the ebb tide has taken us miles out. So now make a place for the lady to lie down on, and you and I will take watch about, until daylight.”

“I am satisfied,” said Walter, “and I will take the first watch. So tell me what it is necessary for me to do while on the watch?”

“You are to keep the tiller in your hand, and keep the boat heading towards the swells and waves, as I am doing; and you must keep your ears sharp open, to catch the sound of breakers, in case we should drift in shore, or on the rocks.”

“Now,” said Minnie, “if that is all there is to do, I insist on taking a watch, so that you two, who are so terribly tired from rowing, can get some sleep. I am fresh, and could not sleep if I were to lie down now. so I entreat to be let do this, dear Walter.”

At first Walter would not listen to the proposal, but at length he yielded to her earnest request, and it was agreed that she was to take the first two hours, as her watch, on condition that she should lie down for the remainder of the night. Walter now gave Minnie his time-piece, putting the guard-chain around her neck, and Johnny and he wrapped themselves in their blankets and were soon asleep at her feet.

666

Now, my young readers, let me ask you to stop with me and look at Minnie as she sits upright, with unflinching courage, in the stern of that boat, with both her little hands grasping the tiller. There is no covering on her head but her own luxuriant hair, for her ears must be kept free to hear every uncommon sound. Her form, from her waist down, is wrapped in the red blanket, got from the pirate ship. Her large, bright eyes are wide open, trying to pierce the darkness around her. She scarcely breathes, she is listening so for the dangers she is warned of. Her brother and the boy are sleeping at her feet, wrapped in their blankets. Now and then she glances at them, and a smile of satisfaction, though sad it may be, passes over her face, and then her gaze is upwards for a moment, and her lips quiver and move, as if in earnest supplication to Him in whose keeping she knows their frail bark rides the dark, fearful ocean beneath her. Boys and girls of California pioneer parents, be proud, for such were your mothers! Aye, and to you men of the California Pioneer Society, we will say shame! for such are the women your constitution excludes from membership.

Just at one o'clock Minnie called Walter, as had been agreed on, and then laid down herself in his place, and was soon rocked to sleep by the great waves of the mighty waters of the Pacific. Walter's watch was three hours, Johnny then took his turn, while Walter slept soundly until after the approach of daylight. The only land in sight as light spread over the ocean, was a mountain, far to the north of them; and they found it impossible to judge in what position they were to the harbor of San Francisco. However, after some discussion, they put the boat on a course they thought most likely to be correct, and rowed slowly on in that direction. Then breakfast was made on hard bread and a drink of the water from the supply Jack had given them. They had made an unexpected discovery this morning. They found, in the bottom of the boat, the two buckskin bags of gold-dust

that had been stolen from Walter the night of his arrival in San Francisco from Downieville. The bags were exactly in the condition they were when Walter handed them to Brown for safe-keeping, sealed as Walter had sealed them, and each seal was marked: "Wagner and Hilton. \$3,500." Johnny gave a smile as the discovery was made, and said:

"Those two sacks went on board the Blue Bell the night you gave them to Brown."

667

Walter threw them down again, saying:

"That was what Jack alluded to last night, when he said he put something on board belonging to us of right. And they will be nice to have if we get safely home."

"Yes, Walter, dear," said Minnie; "and I take our finding them as a good omen."

The gold was not thought of again for some time. The sea was calm, and the day proved intensely hot. They were all feverish from the excitement and hard rowing of the night before, and Walter, particularly, drank water very often. Johnny at length said:

"That will not do, Captain; we must drink as little as possible, for we may get out of water before we get out of this scrape, and then we die sure!"

This caution startled Walter and Minnie, as they had never thought of such a chance as that before. So now all drank sparingly. The whole day passed, but no land came in sight in the direction in which they were rowing. Nor did a sail show itself. The night closed in, and was gone through just as the night before had been. They were now very sparing of the water, and Johnny measured out each one's allowance with an old tin cup he found in the boat. Minnie wanted to take less than Walter and Johnny, insisting that they needed it more than she did; but to this they would not listen, and insisted on her taking her full share with them.

“Yes, Minnie,” said Walter; “while the water lasts, we will share and share alike, and trust in God for the rest!”

The morning of the second day came, and was, like the first, hot and parching; and no land yet appeared in sight. They now materially changed their course, and rowed on in a slow sort of a way. They reduced the allowance of water to the very lowest living quantity, and all were suffering terribly from thirst. They had plenty of the hard bread, but they dare not eat it, because it increased their thirst to drink. Sometimes they broke crumbs of the bread in a few drops of the water, and took both together in that way. Three or four sails appeared in sight this day, but, though they kept their red blankets up as a signal, no notice was taken of it, and the sails disappeared, one after another, leaving them almost in despair. At four o'clock, land came plainly in sight, but they were unfit to row in consequence of their want of water, for every drop was now gone. and their 668 suffering became nearly intolerable. Johnny showed them how to relieve themselves, in some degree, by placing cloths soaked in salt water around their necks and on their stomachs. He cut steel buttons from their clothes, and, putting one in his own mouth, told Walter and Minnie to do the same, as he explained to them that the working of any hard substance in their mouths would bring moisture there; and give partial relief. He, himself, did not hesitate to saturate all his clothes in salt water. Walter was apparently affected more by the thirst than either Johnny or Minnie, yet there was an unnatural wild, bright light even in their eyes. The terrible night closed in, and now Walter got fits of fearful wildness. He laughed immoderately; then suddenly stopped, and insisted that the sea was all on fire around them. This was frightful to hear, and then Minnie, in a suppressed, gentle voice would say:

“Darling Walter, try and control yourself.”

He would put his hand over his eyes, saying: “Yes, dear Minnie, you are right; I will, I will.” Then, in a little while, he would begin to sing, saying: “We may as well sing, Minnie. There is no harm in that.”

Then again Minnie would control him, and so the fearful third night was spent. Day light came; but an intense, dark fog was on the sea. Johnny raised up from where he lay, and said:

“Now, let us all join in one long, loud cry. It may be some ship is lying very near us, and will hear it. I have known of such a cry at sea being heard a great distance through a fog like this.”

So they all joined in the cry, and it was beyond description mournful to hear. Minnie joined, but her cry was all to God, asking for Walter's safety far more than her own. They sat back, Johnny and Walter with their heads resting on the side of the boat, almost gasping for breath. Minnie sat erect, as calm and composed as ever; but her lips were apart, and her breath was hard and short. After awhile, Johnny gave the signal, and one cry more went out into the fog, with a yet more terrible and mournful sound. Walter now threw himself into the bottom of the boat, and laid his head in Minnie's lap, looking up in her face, as with a smile, he said:

“Poor Minnie!”

She stooped her head down, and kissed him, saying:

“Walter, darling, say ‘Thy will, not mine, be done, my God.’”

669

Walter instantly repeated the words after her, and, closing his eyes, he seemed sometimes half-asleep, and sometimes a choking spasm shook his frame; but he never moved his head from Minnie's lap, and she continued to every now and then change the wet cloth on his neck. Suddenly Johnny cries out:

“Oh, we are saved! we are saved! A brig! look, a brig! A brig! Oh, we are saved! we are saved!”

And he leaps up and down, and then gives a loud cry, and drops back into the bottom of the boat in a half-stupor. Walter started at Johnny's cry, raised his head and sees the brig; then dropped it back into the same position, saying:

“Why won't they let us die in peace?”

Minnie hears the cry, raises her head, and sees the ship coming directly for them. Her eyes are fastened on it. Now she sees a boat lowered. Now the ship and boat look to her all on fire, and in the bright fire-light she plainly sees James De Forest. Now her senses seem to be all confused. She laughs aloud, leans her head down over Walter, and, with her hand turning back his hair from his forehead, she murmurs: “Darling, darling!” and continues laughing hysterically. The ship's boat is now alongside, and Minnie hears a well-known voice close to her, saying:

“Oh, darling Minnie, you are saved!”

She turns her head with a sudden start, and says:

“Oh, yes, James; I knew we would find you in heaven before us. Poor Walter and I died last night. How long have you been here?”

Frightened and shocked, De Forest trembled at the sight before him, and only said:

“Darling Minnie, Walter and you are both saved. Try and compose yourselves.”

“Oh, yes, James; but if you were here when we died, you would have been so sorry.” Then suddenly she calls loudly: “Water, water, for Walter!”

They were now alongside the brig, and De Forest, catching Minnie in his arms, scrambled up the side in sailor fashion, and laid his precious burden safely down on the deck of the May Day. The sailors did the same for Walter and the boy. The Captain now took charge of restoring the sufferers, and would allow no interference. Water was given to them by spoonfuls only. The boy recovered first, and, as he came to himself, he suddenly sprang from the man in charge of him, and caught up the pitcher of water, out of which they were slowly feeding him, and when he was seized to prevent him from drinking too much, he yelled like a maniac. They overpowered him, however, and, under the Captain's judicious treatment, he and Walter fast recovered. Minnie's case

seemed a more difficult one, and Mrs. Marshall found it very hard to subdue her fits of hysterical laughing and crying. At length, she seemed to become composed, and to realize that they were saved; but her delicate physical structure had been tried to the utmost, if not beyond its endurance, and it apparently had great difficulty in regaining its full vigor, though her mind had righted itself, and was once more clear and steady. By the middle of the afternoon Walter was sleeping calmly. Johnny was also sound asleep in one of the sailor's bunks. Poor Minnie slept, but her sleep was uneasy, and when she awoke, it was evident that she was in a high fever. The Golden Gate was now in plain view, and the May Day had at last a fair wind. So, with every sail set, she was soon in the bay; and now at six o'clock in the evening she was alongside the wharf in San Francisco. And that was the news the policeman was bringing when he called to John McGlynn and Captain Fitzgerald, saying:

“News! news! Come to the Chief's office!”

As soon as the May Day had touched the wharf, De Forest had Walter and Minnie conveyed in a carriage to their cottage; and Mrs. Marshall kindly accompanied them, as Minnie's fever continued to increase. Minnie now lay in bed in her own, sweet, little room, but in a burning fever. Jane was soon back at her post, and Dr. Coit was called, and did all that was possible to subdue the fever that raged in her veins. All night Jane and Mrs. Marshall watched by Minnie; but morning found her no better. Walter and all her friends were in the greatest alarm. A nurse was procured, as good Mrs. Marshall had to return to her husband. Then the news reached Colonel Eaton's of Minnie's great danger, and Mrs. Eaton and Fannie both came in haste to see her, which ended in their staying to nurse her. Nine days; and yet poor Minnie seemed to linger between life and death, and Dr. Coit would give no opinion. A council of physicians was called, and Dr. Coit's treatment was approved. Another day, and all is joy and happiness, for Dr. Coit, as he leaves Minnie's room, says:

671

“The crisis is past, Mrs. Eaton. She is safe, if properly cared for. Visitors kept away, and all allusions to the terrible scenes she has lately gone through should be carefully avoided.”

Walter and De Forest, who were crouched down in their chairs in the little sitting-room, waiting for the doctor's words, which they knew were to announce Minnie's life or death, heard what he said to Mrs. Eaton with feelings of joy that no one can describe. But we know that in their ecstasy of joy, they did not forget to acknowledge with overflowing gratitude from whence the blessing came. Yes, dear Minnie; the storm that was so long gathering over you has spent its force, and has now cleared away, leaving not a trace of a cloud behind to cast a shadow on your future California life. You are not only uninjured, but you have proved yourself to be a Christian in faith and fidelity, and every inch a true woman; a worthy daughter of the great Republic that gave you birth; a worthy child of the young giant State you have adopted as your own, and that you love so devotedly. Yes, Minnie; the clouds are all gone, and we have not a doubt but that your faith in *God* will be as undoubting and unfaltering in the bright sunshine of your coming life as it was when the night was the darkest.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HAPPY EVENTS—CONCLUSION.

A few words more and my little history must end, for I cannot intrude further on friends by going into their after lives, even if their career among us be ever so prosperous.

While Minnie was so sick Walter was surprised one morning by a visit from Johnny Lucky.

“Captain,” said he, “you see, I was walking along the shore, beyond the Presidio, just to look at the place they say the Blue Bell went ashore the night we left her, and I suddenly came on two dead bodies that were washed on shore, and I turned them over, and one was old Jack sure; so I thought I would ask you to help me to get it nicely buried near poor Miss Lizzie's grave.”

And here the boy turned away and wiped his eyes.

Walter at once gave the necessary assistance. So, for long years, a marble head-stone stood in the Yerba Buena Cemetery, with two names handsomely engraved on it; one was Elizabeth Lawson,

the other was John Lawson, and the grave was always handsomely decorated with rose-bushes and geraniums, evidently well guarded and cared for by some unknown hand.

At this interview with Johnny, Walter inquired if he knew anything of what became of the body of Lusk. The boy told him that the next day after leaving the May Day he went to Saucelito to see if he could find any traces of the body of Ike Lawson; but that he did not find a trace of it, and that when he visited the spot where they had hanged Lusk he found that the rope had been cut by its friction on the rocks, and that the body had disappeared in the sea.

During the following year Walter often met with John Lucky; but he was always reticent, and at length disappeared altogether from his view; and, though many knew him and had often listened to his strange stories, yet, when he finally disappeared, 673 no one could tell where he went to, no more than any one, or even himself, could tell where he came from, in the first place.

When once Minnie passed the crisis, she regained her health and strength rapidly, and on the third day of her convalescence Mrs. Eaton and Fannie left for their own home, as the Colonel expressed himself very lonely without them.

Minnie was now overrun with congratulations from all her friends. Captain Fitzgerald was installed as a member of her family, and the evening of his life was rescued from its lonesome outlook.

Minnie and James De Forest have had their full explanation, and he is entirely satisfied with her reasons for not being more open with him when such grave difficulties began to gather around Walter — but then he hints to her that perhaps she was a little too proud in the matter.

“Well, dear James,” she says, “perhaps that was so, and that I was punished for my pride.”

“Well, never mind, darling Minnie,” he says; “all is well that ends well, you know; and if I had not started for Oregon just as I did, perhaps no one on board of the May Day would have heard your cry for help.”

And then they closed the discussion in a way to suit themselves, and settled the matter as sweetly and innocently as they had often made up disputes when children together.

Captain Fitzgerald is preparing to start for New York to bring out his long-lost sister. Then Walter and Minnie give the Captain a power of attorney to join with their mother in making a deed of their sweet little Newark homestead to Uncle John Wagner. Then James De Forest goes to Oregon, to return by the time Captain Fitzgerald gets back; and he does return all right, after having prepared a beautiful residence in his Oregon home in every respect as he knew Minnie's taste to be.

After Fanny Eaton returned home with her mother, Walter very soon found he had pressing business in the neighborhood of Sacramento. Fannie's heart bounds when she hears his voice in the parlor. She is pale and scarlet by turns. She cannot stay out of the parlor, though she did not wish to appear to be in a hurry to go in. As she enters, she intends to look surprised when she sees Walter, but she makes an egregious failure of it — and finds she cannot possibly ask him, as she intended to do, what he came for; for she knows right well what he came *for*, yet wishes to pretend she did not.

674 That evening Walter has along talk with the Colonel, in which Mrs. Eaton joins. Then Mrs. Eaton's handkerchief is all wet with tears of lonesomeness and joy.

Early the next morning Walter takes a chance to talk to Fannie. He tells her of Minnie's engagement and impending marriage with James De Forest, and goes on to tell her how terribly lonesome and miserable he will be when Minnie is gone; and draws such aghast picture that Fannie's tears flow fast, and then her heart throbs — oh, so hard, that you could hear it across the room — and she lets Walter take her hand, for the poor fellow is so sad and lonesome talking of Minnie; and then, as he whispers something, very low, to her, she looks up. then their eyes meet, and then — and then — yes — and then — well, I cannot tell a word more without a breach of confidence; so excuse me, my dear young readers; but one thing I will tell you, though strange it may appear, after such depression and sadness:

When Walter and Minnie appeared at breakfast they were both — yes, both — though Minnie was to go to Oregon so soon — in the wildest and most joyous spirits; and the happy feeling seemed to have a contagion about it; for Colonel and Mrs. Eaton acted as happily and frolicsome as if they were only just married that day themselves, or going to be, instead of the staid old couple they were the night before when Mrs. Eaton had such use for her handkerchief.

Then, after Walter gets back to San Francisco, comes a letter to Fannie from Minnie, full of joyous congratulations and lighthearted fun, and it concludes:

“So you see, Miss Fannie, I am not the mischievous, wicked, good-for-nothing girl you once called me, after all. And now, Fannie, darling sister, as from this day I call you, I want you to get your dear parents to consent that we be married the same day, here in San Francisco.”

And so it was in the end arranged. Then came good Isaac Hilton to San Francisco; and, after due consideration, articles of partnership between him and Walter were agreed on, to do business in San Francisco. Walter's recovered gold gave him sufficient capital to do this, and Captain Fitzgerald put twenty thousand dollars into the concern as a silent partner.

Then came the realization of James De Forest's day-dream; but even brighter and more joyous than he had dared to dream it. 675 It was a double marriage. Minnie and Fanny both wore the white dresses and orange-blossoms, as he had it in his fancy. As Minnie was arranging her bridal ornaments, she showed James the locket with the sweet little rosebud he had given her so long ago at the little cottage gate in Newark. And it spoke of truth and constancy more sweetly than words could do.

The little church in Market street is crowded with friends on that early morning.

James De Forest and Minnie, Walter and Fannie, stand before the altar. Father Maginnis is there to perform the double marriage. Walter and Minnie's beloved mother is there, as well as Colonel and

Mrs. Eaton, Captain Fitzgerald, Isaac Hilton and his good wife, John A. McGlynn, James Becket, Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Allen, with their two beautiful eldest children.¹

Jerry Brady had come on a special invitation from Minnie to be master of ceremonies in the carriage line — and it is my opinion that General Sherman did not look half so proud when he was marching through Washington City, at the head of a victorious army at the close of the war of rebellion, than Jerry Brady did that wedding day while giving orders in regard to the carriages.

Captain Fitzgerald had presented Jerry with a fine gold watch and chain. The chain was in length and fashion of the regular log-chain style, and no horseman in the State could show one to excel it.

I will just mention here that Jerry found himself greatly disturbed and made very unhappy by the many attractions of Jane (Minnie's faithful hired girl) and, seeing that she was attracted by the display of gold across his breast, he thought it a favorable moment to tell Jane of his desolate and unhappy feeling, and of the nice little home he had in Sacramento to share with somebody; and she listened until Jerry slyly got a turn of the gold chain around her neck; and the consequences was that Jerry Brady wrote to his dear, old mother in Ireland and countermanded the order for “the girl that was to be shipped for him around Cape Horn, with a bit of a bill of lading, all properly signed by the Captain of the ship,” as he had told the gamblers that morning on the Marysville road, when he was so gallantly aiding in Minnie's rescue.

676

As Father Maginnis was wishing Minnie good-bye, he said:

“Minnie, child, you are too much dressed to-day. Take off those things,” pointing to her gay bridal dress and ornaments, “as soon as you can, and put on your every-day, useful clothes.”

Minnie laughed, and then, she saw big tears in the old man's eyes as he continued in a low, hurried voice:

“God bless you, Minnie; be as good as you always were. Good-bye, good-bye. I am in a hurry to be off.”

Then came a magnificent breakfast given to that joyous wedding party by Captain Fitzgerald and his sister, Mrs. Wagner. As at that time I was a reporter for one of the daily papers, I had an invitation, and enjoyed the whole scene with a zest a pioneer Californian alone could feel. I marked well the company, and I felt proud of our people and of our young State. And, as I walked home, I could not help exclaiming: “Oh, California! California! if your acquisition has cost treasure and valuable lives, you have flung broadcast over your sister States gold by the million and the million, that has cheered many and many a weary heart! And you have, besides, enriched the National treasury, which may yet save the nation, if endangered by foreign foe, or civil feud. Yes; if your coming has brought sorrow to some hearts, you have also brought joys to many, with no sparing hand. If, in the wish to possess themselves of your treasures, villains and hypocrites have come to the surface, and fed for a time on the vitals of the people, you have also drawn forth from obscurity a hundred times the number of as brave and noble a race of men as ever trod the earth; and, above all, you have drawn forth for our administration and love, a race of women unsurpassed, the world over, in every quality that makes women dear to men, and fit mothers for children of this republic.

Yes; California, you have drawn forth in '47, '48, '49, '50 and '51, pioneer women worthy of a place in history alongside those who accompanied the English emigrants to Plymouth Rock, and Lord Baltimore to the shores of Maryland. Yes; whose history will serve to arouse emulation among the true daughters of America and shame away luxuriant idleness from the precincts of their houses.

Yes; dear California, we may be proud of your men, your climate, ⁶⁷⁷ your soil, your great rivers and bays, your inexhaustible hidden treasures, your spreading fields of golden grain that will yet feed half the world, your boundless pastures, with uncounted herds and flocks, furnishing to all the most delicious meats; but, above all this, every true son you have will be prouder, far, of your pioneer women, and will forever love and honor them; for to us pioneer men they were all in all, and being tried in the crucible of a pioneer life, they proved to be of the purest GOLD.

THE END.